Articles

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The current issue is the first of the seventh volume of the *Athens Journal of History (AJHIS), published by the History Unit of ATINER*.

Gregory T. Papanikos
President
ATINER

Athens Institute for Education and Research
A World Association of Academics and Researchers

19th Annual International Conference on History & Archaeology:
From Ancient to Modern, 31 May & 1-3 June 2021, Athens, Greece

The History Unit of ATINER, will hold its **19th Annual International Conference on History & Archaeology: From Ancient to Modern, 31 May & 1-3 June 2021, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of History. The aim of the conference is to bring together scholars and students of all areas of history, archaeology and other related disciplines. You may participate as a stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2021/FORM-HIS.doc).

Important Dates

- Abstract Submission: **1 February 2021**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **3 May 2021**

Academic Members Responsible for the Conference

- Dr. Steven Oberhelman, Professor of Classics, Holder of the George Sumey Jr Endowed Professorship of Liberal Arts, and Associate Dean, Texas A&M University, USA, USA, Vice President of International Programs, ATINER and Editor of the Athens Journal of History.
- Dr. Nicholas Pappas, Vice President of Academic Membership, ATINER & Professor of History, Sam Houston University, USA.
- Dr. David Philip Wick, Director, Arts and Humanities Division & Professor of History, Gordon College, USA.
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Social and Educational Program
The Social Program Emphasizes the Educational Aspect of the Academic Meetings of Atiner.
- Greek Night Entertainment (This is the official dinner of the conference)
- Athens Sightseeing: Old and New-An Educational Urban Walk
- Social Dinner
- Mycenae Visit
- Exploration of the Aegean Islands
- Delphi Visit
- Ancient Corinth and Cape Sounion

Conference Fees

Conference fees vary from 400€ to 2000€
Details can be found at: https://www.atiner.gr/2021fees

Athens Institute for Education and Research
A World Association of Academics and Researchers

14th Annual International Conference on Literature
31 May & 1-3 June 2021, Athens, Greece

The Literature Unit of ATINER is organizing its **13th Annual International Conference on Literature, 31 May & 1-3 June 2021, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of Philology. The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers from all areas of literature and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2021/FORM-LIT.doc).

Important Dates
- Abstract Submission: **1 February 2021**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: 3 **May 2021**

Academic Member Responsible for the Conference

- **Dr. Stamos Metzidakis**, Head, Literature Research Unit, ATINER & Emeritus Professor of French and Comparative Literature, Washington University in Saint Louis, USA.

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The Turning Point: The American Ceasefire Initiative between Israel and Egypt, August 1970

By Moshe Gat[*]

The ceasefire of August 1970 proved the United States' ability to set the wheels of the peace process in motion. The USSR did not partner with it en route to the ceasefire, and, in fact, was against it. The ceasefire between Israel and Egypt may be viewed as a turning point in Egyptian-American relations. It was Nasser who had led the United States to intervene in the peace process, without the help of the Soviets, creating an opportunity for the return of US clout in Egypt, after it had reached an unprecedented low during and after the Six Day War. In fact, after the ceasefire the United States was slowly becoming a major axis in the pollical process. For Egypt, the United States was the only power that would help in returning the occupied lands.

Introduction

The end of the second world war in 1945 marked a new era in the international relationship known as the cold war. This war was characterized by power struggle between the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States and its allies. On the one hand the USSR sought to expand its influence around the glove and on the second hand the US adopted a policy of containment, the purpose of which was economic and military assistance to any country threatened by the Soviets. The struggle between the great powers first focused on Europe. In this part of the world the USSR passed most of Eastern European countries under its control as well as over East Germany. The struggle then shifted to the Far East and manifested in 1951 war in Korea. This war ended in 1953, but its result were two Korean states- the South and the North.

From the early 1950s, the USSR began to increase its penetration into the Middle East. The arm deal between the Soviet Union and Egypt in 1955, known as the Czech deal, marked the beginning of Soviets influence. In subsequent years, the USSR provided Egypt with economic, military, and political assistance and became the main arms supplier of Egypt and Syria.

On the other hand, Israel was supported, to one degree or another, by the United States, Britain and France, powers that also provided it with modern weapons. Just as Europe and the Far East were part of the international power struggle, so the Middle East became part of the cold war.[1] The war that broke out on 5 June 1967 between Israel and its neighboring countries – Egypt, Syria, and Jordan – known in historiography as the Six Day War, was among other things, a product of the cold war. During the war, from June 5 to June 10, the Arab armed forces suffered a crushing defeat by the hands of the Israeli military, which

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1. Lundestad, *East*, 32-46, 81-82, 118-119.

proceeded to seize the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from the Egyptians, the Golan Heights from the Syrians, and the West Bank from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Egypt blamed the United States and United Kingdom for aiding Israel during the war. Egyptian President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, announced that there was clear evidence of an imperialist conspiracy with the enemy, and in response, severed Egypt's diplomatic relations with the United States. This marked an unprecedented low point in the relations between the two countries since the Egyptian Officers' Coup in 1952.[2] When the June war ended, American clout in the region gradually eroded, whereas that of the Soviet Union increasingly grew despite the defeat of its allies, Egypt and Syria. In fact, one might say that the Soviets had not been this influential since the Egyptian-Czechoslovak arms deal of 1955. Following the war, the Soviets were active on two fronts:

a. Military aid to compensate for what had been lost during the war, and a reorganization of Egyptian and Syrian armed forces.
b. Political support in the form of adopting the Arab standpoint whereby any negotiation must be preceded by an Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied during the war.[3]

In contrast to this position, the Israeli leadership assumed that the harsh blow it had dealt the Arabs would lead them to the realization that they had to join the negotiating table in order to pursue the resolution of the conflict.[4] It viewed the territories as a bargaining chip with an underlying security and existential basis, regardless of any historical or religious one.[5] Washington was also of the opinion that the Arabs' crushing defeat had created suitable circumstances for the resolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict, and the establishment of a permanent agreement for the resolution of the refugee problem.[6] In an address given on 19 June President Johnson set several principles for the resolution of the conflict: Israeli withdrawal from Arab land should only follow a peace accord that includes, inter alia, respecting the political independence of neighboring countries, free passage, and a just solution to the refugee issue. He did not rule out possible border modifications between the parties. These

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2. Sharnoff, *Nasser's Peace*, 31-33; Jesse Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, 261, 263. See also, Gat, Britain, and the Conflict in the Middle East, 16-17, 26.

3. Sharnoff, *Nasser's Peace*, 57.

4. Haber, *Today War Will Break Out*, 258-259; Pedatzur, *Triumph of Embarrassment*, 28.

5. Israeli State Archives (ISA), Jerusalem, A-10/6304, Prime Minister's Files, 9 June 1967; Eban, *Memoirs*, 430; Rabin, *Service Notebook*, vol. 1, 226-227.

6. The National Archive, Kew, London (TNA), Foreign Office (FO), 17/522, Wilson to Johnson, 15 June 1967; Prime Minister's Office (PREM),13/1620, Record of a Telephone Conversation, 7June 1967, and FO to Certain Missions, 16 June 1967; Rostow, *Peace in Balance*, 250-255.

principles served as the basis for US policy in every negotiation effort between Israel and its neighbors.[7]

On 22 November UN Security Council reached Resolution 242, whereby just and sustainable peace was to be established, and include withdrawal from the territories occupied during the war, agreed borders between Israel and its neighbors, the cessation of the state of belligerence, an international effort to resolve the refugee problem, and free passage in international waterways. According to the resolution, a special envoy was to be appointed by the UN General Secretary and sent to the region without delay to help reach a peace agreement.[8] Gunnar Jarring, the special envoy, attempted to advance an agreement primarily between Israel and Egypt throughout 1968, but to no avail.[9]

A new US administration was introduced into this political stagnation, headed by President Richard Nixon, who entered the White House on January 20, 1969. Unlike its predecessors, this administration was determined to promote a peace agreement between Israel and its neighboring Arab countries. President Nixon attributed great importance to the Middle East due to its strategic significance, viewing it as a dangerous area, especially after Nasser launched a war of attrition against Israel in March 1969, that could lead to a conflict between the two superpowers.[10] US Secretary of State, William Rogers, assumed that the continued Israeli control of the territories harmed US interests. The unrelenting stagnation increased Arab disgruntlement, fed extreme forces in the Arab world, and facilitated the expansion of Soviet impact. It also created tension between Israel and its neighboring countries that could potentially have escalated to hostilities. Thus, to refrain from further erosion in US clout, it was necessary to take immediate action to resolve the conflict.[11]

Rogers attempted to reach an agreed formula for the resolution of the conflict with the Soviets, but to no avail. Any idea raised that did not align with the Egyptian standpoint, i.e. total Israeli withdrawal prior to any negotiation, was rejected by the Soviets. Ultimately, Rogers formulated a plan known as the Rogers Plan, whereby Israel was to withdraw to its June 4 international border with Egypt. The Rogers Plan also included: the establishment of demilitarized zones; ensured free passage through Egypt and the canal; recognition of parties' sovereignty and political independence, as well their right to exist in peace; and

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7. Shannon, *Balancing Act*, 64; Lyndon, *Vantage Point*, 303.

8. For the full text of Resolution 242 see Moore, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 802-803.

Foreign Relation of the United States (FRUS), 1964-1968, *Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967*, vol. 19, 930, 940-943.

9. Riad, *Struggle for Peace*, 78-79; Korn, *Stalemate*, 142.

10. United States National Archives (hereafter USNA), RG59/1821, Rogers to Moscow, 23 June 1969; Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*,172; Stein, *Heroic Diplomacy*, 57; Yaqub, "Politics of Stalemate.", 37.

11. Quandt, *Peace Process*, 61-62, 64; Tschrigi, *American Search*, 57; Yaqub, "Politics of stalemate", 36; Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger*, 172; Rabin, *Service Notebook*, vol., 1, 246.

the resolution of the refugee problem. According to the plan, the withdrawal to the June 4 lines was to be carried out only once all required arrangements were in place as part of a signed peace accord.[12] However, both parties rejected the plan. Egypt argued that it was not serious enough, but merely a vehicle by which to push it to the negotiating table from a weak position. Cairo maintained that battle was the only alternative, stating their land will be retrieved with blood and fire. *Al Ahram* newspaper called it a trap.[13] The Israeli government thought the plan posed a danger to Israel's existence.[14]

Soviet Involvement

In the absence of a political solution, the Israeli government decided in early January 1970 to employ a new strategy of deep-penetration air raids in Egypt. These strategic bombings aimed to invoke Egypt's surrender and renew the ceasefire. The Egyptian armed forces were helpless against the harsh blows delivered by Israeli Air Force.[15] The deep-penetration air raids had a devastating effect on the Egyptian military's morale. Instead of exhausting Israel through war, as Nasser announced he would do in March 1969, it was the IDF [Israeli Defense Force] that exhausted Egypt. The suburbs of Egypt's capital, Cairo, had war brought to their very doorstep, as did other cities in Egypt .The US State Department was very concerned by these strategic bombings, for instead of promoting a political resolution of the conflict, they were exacerbating matters. One expression of this concern was President Nixon's announcement on January 30, 1970 that he was postponing all arms shipments to Israel and would reexamine this matter in due course.[16]

And indeed, on late February the Soviets began to deploy SA3 batteries around Cairo, Alexandria, and Aswan. In fact, an anti-aircraft missile belt was set up around those cities, manned by Soviet teams under Soviet command. In addition to the missile units, combat squadrons complete with operators were sent to defend inner Egyptian airspace. The forces and equipment sent merely aimed to put a stop to the strategic bombings.[17] Washington argued that the arms shipments were not irresponsible.[18]

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12. Moore, *Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1024-1033.

13. TNA, FCO17/132, Record of Anglo-American Talks, 29 January 1970; Parker, *Politics of Miscalculations*, 138.

14. Kissinger, *White House Years*, vol.1, 401; Rabin, *Service Notebook*, vol.1, 263.

15. Gawrych, *Albatross of Decisive Victory*, 144; Eban, *Memoirs*, 459; Rabin, *Service Notebook*, vol. 1, 271-272.

16. Rafael, Destination Peace, 195; Spiegel, Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, 191.

17. Heikal, *Secret Channels*, 152; Korn, *Stalemate*, 190-191. For a figure on the Soviet forces in Egypt at that time see, Vitan, "Soviet Military Presence.", 552.

18. USNA, RG59/2051, Memorandum of Conversation, March 20, 1970.

Soviet involvement was also manifest on the warfront. The Israeli Air Force's freedom of action was narrowing in light of the missile deployment. On March 20, Israeli Minister of Defense, Moshe Dayan, announced that Israel would minimize its strategic bombings, and will not attempt to assert its strategic superiority everywhere in Egypt. Instead, he stated, Israel's superiority would be limited to the canal area.[19] When Egypt saw that the Soviet involvement had impeded Israel's capabilities, it heightened its attacks against Israeli forces. Military exacerbation between Israel and Egypt was ever imminent, and the Americans sought to end this mutual bloodshed, and find a way back to peace negotiations.

The US Secretary of State blamed the raids for the Soviets' involvement, and the flow of sophisticated weaponry systems and crews to Egypt. Moreover, if aircraft were to be provided, Israel could become even more adamant, making it harder to set in motion the peace process, while spurring the regional arms race, and enhancing violence.[20] Rogers' assumption was that an American announcement that the supply of aircraft to Israel was postponed would not serve as reason for the Soviets to send large amounts of weapons to Egypt. He also maintained that if the Soviets wanted to renew the talks and reach a political arrangement, their position should be softened by a display of American restraint.[21]And indeed, on 23 March, Rogers announced that Israel's aerial capabilities sufficiently met its needs for the time being. The US President therefore decided to suspend the shipment of aircraft.[22]

However, the Soviets were not interested in reaching any form of agreement on limiting arms, and particularly not with regard to a ceasefire that would motivate a peace process.[23] From the Soviets point of view an arrangement based on the Rogers Plan would only benefit the United States. The State Department therefore concluded that the Soviets were not serious about a ceasefire between Egypt and Israel, were completely opposed to limiting arms, and objected to the Rogers Plan. Their policy was one of standstill and ongoing violence between Israel and Egypt, which served their purposes by "keeping the pot boiling". The Nixon administration decided to advance the peace process without the Soviets' help. There was reason to believe that both Egypt and Israel were interested in greater US involvement at the time, and in a way out of the exhausting war in which they were tangled up.

Although Egypt appreciated the Soviets' military capabilities, and their provision of weapons, equipment, and human resources to defend Egyptian

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19. Bar-Siman-Tov, "Myth of Strategic Bombing.", 559.

20. USNA, RG59/2062, Rogers to Tel Aviv, 11 April 1970; Korn, *Stalemate,* 198-199.

21. Nixon, *Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 480; Bar-Siman-Tov, *Israel*, 172.

22. Rafael, *Destination Peace*, 199; Rubinstein, *Red Star*, 115.

23. USNA, Nixon Files/653, SD to Moscow, 12 June 1969; USNA, RG59/1837, Memorandum for the President, 20 June 1969; Korn, *Stalemate*, 155; Kissinger, *White House Years*, vol.1, 391.

territory, it realized that its ally lacked political skill. This great superpower, for nearly three years, since the 1967 war had ended, failed to force Israel out of the territories it occupied. Nasser acknowledged the United States' capabilities, as well as its influence over Israel. The Americans possessed the power to make Israel withdraw to its June 4 international border, as they had done following the Suez Crisis in 1957. The Egyptian President therefore opened a direct communication channel with the US administration to discuss a political arrangement.[24] The opening of such channel with the Americas indicates the pragmatism of the Egyptian president, a leader who did not adhere to ideological principles. The willingness to begin a direct dialogue with Washington was a shift in Egyptian policy, for until then, all peace talks had been held between the United States and Soviet Union. But Egypt did not forego its special relations with the USSR at that time either, for it had supported it militarily, and aligned itself with its standpoint on the resolution of the conflict.

Moreover, the Egyptian leader's willingness was timely. Having the home front defended by anti-aircraft means provided the Egyptian public with a sense of security. It felt like it could withstand Israeli attacks, and even deliver a blow to the Israeli armed forces. Egypt subsequently began to employ its artillery relentlessly. Its willingness to hold talks with the US administration was not an indication of humiliation or surrender, it reflected recognition of its power, regardless of whether this was objectively true or not.[25] The direct dialogue with the United States also expressed Egypt's exhaustion with the ongoing war of attrition, for despite Nasser's confidence, by that point he was looking for a way out of it.

Israel was also interested in greater American involvement, but from a different perspective. The Soviet involvement was a cause for concern, as was the US policy that suspended the supply of aircraft to it at a time when the military situation was escalating. Moreover, the war had exacerbated, and the continuous war of attrition was gnawing at Israeli society. The public was appalled by the growing number of victims and felt that the government was not doing enough to end the belligerence. Some of the young adults on the brink of being drafted into the IDF were less motivated to do so, as they saw the Israeli armed forces attempting to end the war to no avail. The toll was high, and soldiers continued to die in a war that appeared endless.[26]

The United States felt that the conditions created – both sides' weariness of the prolonged war, Nasser's acknowledgement of its ability to resolve the conflict,

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24. USNA, RG59/2052, Rogers to London, 8 April 1970; Sadat, *Search of Identity*: An Autobiography, 198.

25. ISA, Hez9/6854, Rabin to Jerusalem, 28 April 1970; USNA, RG59/2052, Memorandum for Kissinger, 5 May 1970.

26. Gazit, *Israeli Diplomacy*, 79; Ya'acobi, *Grace of Time,* 87; Shem-Tov, "Golda's Missed Opportunit, 226-227.

and the pressure exerted on Israel by its refusal to supply more aircraft – were paving the way for a new initiative that would motivate the peace process in motion.

En route to a Ceasefire

The State Department decided to begin by taking steps towards a ceasefire without the Soviets' help. The Soviets' conduct, assumed Rogers, was indicative of how the USSR was intentionally ignoring the severe and dangerous situation that resulted from its decision to take an active part in defending Egypt.[27]The need therefore emerged for a limited ceasefire accompanied by preservation of the military status quo on both sides of the canal. It could also mitigate the risk embedded in an Israeli-Soviet conflict, which would increase the hazard of a conflict between the two superpowers. Hence this political initiative, which was submitted to the parties' review on 19 June. According to it: To facilitate the role played by the special envoy in the promotion of the accord, the two parties were to agree to renew the ceasefire for three months.

Golda Meir was devastated by this proposal. The ceasefire as proposed by the US provided Egypt with ninety days in which to recover from Israeli attacks, implement new weapons, and renew the fighting from an improved position, while Israel was denied aircraft shipments. What the United States were ultimately asking Israel to do was pay the price of a weaker military in return for negotiations, whereas Egypt remained free to continue with its war of attrition, and receive unlimited supply of ammunition from the Soviets. Moreover, the latter were not limited in any way in their shipments of weapons to Egypt, and they were free to keep the flow going whenever they desired.[28] In short, Meir's view on the US initiative was absolutely negative.

President Nixon therefore decided to intervene to stop the Israeli government from giving a negative reply. On 21 June he sent a letter to Golda Meir emphasizing US commitment to and concern for Israel's security. He wrote that he "attached the highest importance to the effort we are making. The Soviet threat is both political and military, and our initiative is designed to meet that threat in both its aspects". He therefore asked to avoid taking "any irreversible action" by requesting that Israel refrain from being the first to respond to the initiative if its reply was to be negative. He asked Israel to wait for Egypt's answer before giving its own, so that it would not be blamed for the initiative's failure. If

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27. USNA, Nixon Files/H-30, Memorandum for the President, 9 June 1970.
28. USNA, RG50/2054, Tel Aviv to SD, 19 June 1970.

Israel were to be blamed, it would have been a major setback both for Israel and the United States.[29]

The Soviets disapproved of the initiative. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrei Gromyko, told US ambassador to Moscow, Jacob Beam, that the initiative was nothing new, and contained all the disadvantages of previous efforts. Dobrynin, Soviet ambassador in Washington, told Henry Kissinger' Head of National Security Council, that this initiative was an American attempt to take over Middle Eastern diplomacy.[30] And indeed, an initiative bearing the White House seal did not serve Soviet interests, for it was a manifestation of American capabilities, an indication that none other could drive the peace process in motion.

 Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Communist Party, was certainly aware that Egypt was leaning towards accepting the American proposal. He told Nasser that the US administration was taking full credit for the initiative. It was, he said, "a shrewd and cunning way" of presenting the initiative to see to it that Egypt will accept a proposal bearing the White House seal alone. Nasser may have agreed with him but said that he assumed the Israeli government would reject the offer, for accepting it would cause a domestic rift. He believed that to be the reason why Israel had, until that point, refrained from revealing its standpoint on the matter altogether. Both Israel and the United States assumed that Egypt would reject it, thus justifying the renewed delivery of aircraft to Israel.[31]

The issue of aircraft supply to Israel hung over the Egyptians' heads while they contemplated their response to the initiative. Moreover, he felt three months of no fighting would allow the public to breathe again after many months of war that took a heavy toll on the population. It would give the Egyptian army some time to rest and improve its capabilities, also allowing for the missile batteries to be advanced towards the western bank of the canal, for until then, the Israeli Air Force had prevented it.[32] On July 22, several days after Nasser's return from Moscow, Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mahmoud Riad, told Rogers they accepted the initiative. This move meant that Egypt had accepted its failure to achieve the goals it had set when it began its war of attrition against Israel. It also constituted a shift in Egyptian policy, that until then had demanded Israeli withdrawal from the territories prior to any negotiation. Egypt had now agreed to a ceasefire without obtaining Israel's promise of total withdrawal.

The Egyptians accepted the American offer made, and were joined by the Soviets, leaving Israel in a very difficult position. A negative response meant colliding with the administration that was doing everything in its power to

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29. USNA, RG59/2065, Rogers to Nixon, 20 June 1970; Rabin, *Service Notebook*, vol. 1, 292.

30. Kissinger, *White House Years*, vol. 2, 607.

31. Riad, *Struggle for Peace*, 145; Heika, *Road to Ramadan*, 95; Sadat, *Search of Identity*, 198-199; Wehling, *Irresolute Princes*, 90-91.

32. Abdel Majid, *Nasser,* 176; Heikal, *Secret Channels*, 156; Pollock, *Politics of Pressure*, 77; Riad, *Struggle for Peace*, 144-145.

initiate a peace process and would also harm Israeli interests. Dayan phrased it as follows: "Israel is too strong to have arrangements forced upon it, but too weak to be slipping at present into a political conflict with the US". The other front was the military one. The Soviets' entry with their missile batteries not only put a stop to the deep-penetration air raids but increased Israeli aircraft's vulnerability. On 29 July, in a collision with Soviet pilots, the Israeli Air Force intercepted four Migs. These incidents indicated that the war was expanding, highlighting the possible collision with Soviet forces on Egyptian soil. Under these circumstances, Prime Minister Meir announced the acceptance of the US initiative on August 4, preferring it to a conflict with the US administration, and the ongoing war on the canal front.[33] The Israeli-Egyptian ceasefire entered into force on August 7.

The two parties' acceptance of the ceasefire initiative indicated a shift in both their policies, but first and foremost it reflected the turn taken in Egyptian-US relations. If any victory had been scored, it was scored by US diplomacy. The ability to make both parties agree without the help of any other superpower proved that the United States did not require the Soviets' assistance in igniting the peace process, was capable of having direct dialogue with Egypt, and offering the Rogers initiative as it did.

Conclusion

The ceasefire was, in this respect, a turning point. Egypt and Israel had had skirmishes since the Six Day War had ended, escalating from March 1969 onwards, after Nasser had declared a war of attrition against Israel. From August 1970, once the ceasefire agreement was signed, the Israeli-Egyptian border was quiet until October 1973, when the Yom Kippur War broke out.

From the moment the ceasefire was agreed upon, negotiations on the resolution of the conflict began between Egypt and the United States. Although Nasser had led the Americans to intervene in the peace process, it was his successor, Anwar Sadat, who wanted to turn the US into a central axis that would help Egypt regain control of its occupied territories. It was no wonder, therefore, that Sadat told the Americans early on in his term in office, in October 1970, that his country sought genuine peace that would end the bloodshed.[34] The Egyptian president had indeed broadened his country's collaboration with the United States, seeking an arrangement throughout the three years leading up to the October 1973 Yom Kippur War. Following it, the United States had the parties sign a ceasefire agreement on 22 October, followed by an Agreement on Disengagement in January 1974, and a similar agreement with Syria in May that

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33. Rafael, *Destination Peace*, 266; Shiff, *Phantom over the Nile*, 227.
34. Burns, *Economic Aid*,176-177; El Hussini, 184; Heikal. *Secret Channels*, 169.

year. America's ability peaked at the signing of a peace accord between Israel and Egypt in March 1979.

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Populist Rhetorical Strategies in the Courts of Classical Athens

By Vasileios Adamidis[*]

The elusive populist phenomenon has been the focus of numerous studies in recent years, with the reliance of populism on divisive and aggressive rhetoric being acknowledged. The paper aims to apply these findings to the Athenian forensic rhetoric and identify manifestations of populist rhetoric in the antagonistic arena of Athenian courts. By reference to the most 'political' of public trials, namely the indictments against inexpedient laws and illegal decrees, it is argued that the rhetorical strategies employed by the Athenian litigants who sought to persuade mass audiences in a zero-sum process, have much in common with modern populist discourse. Aiming to secure the good will of the dicasts, speakers competed over their level of adherence to the shared traditional values and norms of Athenian society, making the audience the nodal point of their rhetoric. Artfully interpellating the audience into a fictitiously pure and homogeneous group, litigants sought to establish concord with the dicasts while alienating the opponent. The division between the pure demos and the corrupt establishment, allowed the speakers to use a divisive and aggressive rhetoric, through which the adversary was presented as an outsider, representative of the out-group of corrupt political elite who undermined the political and moral principles upon which the Athenian identity was based.

Populism is an essentially contested concept that is hard to define[1]. It has been classified, inter alia, as ideology[2], strategy[3], political logic[4], rhetoric[5], and

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1. For the definition of 'essentially contested concepts' see W.B. Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56, no. 1 (1956): 169. For populism as an 'essentially contested concept' see Cas Mudde, "Populism: An Ideational Approach," in *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, edited by C. Rovira Kaltwasser, P. Taggart, P. Ochoa Espejo, P. Ostiguy (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 27-47.

2. For populism as an ideology, see Cas Mudde, "The Populist Zeitgeist," *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 543; Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens, "Populism versus Democracy," *Political Studies* 55, no. 2 (2007): 405-424; Ben Stanley, "The Thin Ideology of Populism," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 13, no. 1 (2008): 95-110; Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser "Populism and (Liberal) Democracy: A Framework for Analysis," in *Populism in Europe and the Americas: Threat or Corrective for Democracy?*, edited by Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1–26.

3. Kurt Weyland, "Clarifying a Contested Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics," *Comparative Politics* 34, no. 1 (2001): 14. For populism as a strategy, see Robert R. Barr, "Populists, Outsiders and Anti-Establishment Politics," *Party Politics* 15, no. 1 (2009): 29-48.

4. Ernesto Laclau, *The Populist Reason*, (London: Verso, 2005).

5. Martin Reisigl, "Analyzing Political Rhetoric," in *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by Ruth Wodak and Michał Krzyżanowski, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

discourse[6]. Promises of power for the many, not for the few (members of the elite), are increasingly present in modern political discourse and shape the ideological framework, especially, of liberal democracies. Despite the true beliefs and objectives of populist leaders, rhetoric is their main vehicle for mobilizing the masses and persuading large audiences about the sincerity of their intentions. Populist rhetoric is predominantly an appeal that pits the (often marginalized and discontented) pure 'People', the common citizens, against an out-group, often loosely defined 'establishment', 'elite' or oligarchy'[7]. The focus of this type of rhetoric lies on the mode of political expression evident in text, speech, and performance, which might eventually, allow populists to dominate the political field and monopolize the political discourse.

Populist rhetoric is divisive, antagonistic, anti-pluralist, and often aggressive[8]. Its strategic objective is the effective manipulation of the People's thoughts and emotions, by artfully interpellating them as a homogeneous group with putatively common identity and interests, whose just demands and rights are denied by the establishment and the ruling elite. This is an artificial construction, at best referring to a specific interpretation (and simplification) of reality.[9] The tactics used to implement this strategy are, initially, to interpellate the fictional group of 'pure' People, who are often described as (or feeling) vulnerable, by creating bonds between them through the cultivation of a shared identity by reference to common values[10]. The People are, subsequently, pitted against an equally fictional and oversimplified Corrupt and Voracious Elite, separating the two groups by creating clear boundaries, binaries, and dichotomies.

The aim of this paper is to trace manifestations of populist rhetorical strategies in the classical Athenian forensic speeches. The antagonistic nature of the Athenian administration of justice and the need to persuade large audiences

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6. Kirk A. Hawkins, "Is Chavez Populist? Measuring Populist Discourse in Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 8 (2009): 1040-1067; Carlos De La Torre, *Populist Seduction in Latin America*, (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2010); Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995). For populism as style, which takes in both the rhetorical and the aesthetic aspects of populist communication, rather than merely discourse, see Benjamin Moffitt, *The Global Rise of Populism: Performance, Political Style and Representation*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press: 2016).

7 See, for example, Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser, "Studying Populism in Comparative Perspective: Reflections on the Contemporary and Future Research Agenda," *Comparative Political Studies* 51, no. 2 (2018): 1669.

8 Populism is anti-pluralistic as illustrated by Jan-Werner Müller, *What Is Populism?* (University of Pennsylvania Press 2016).

9 Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser, Populism. A Very Short Introduction, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2017): 9.

10 See Margaret Canovan, "Taking Politics to the People: Populism as the Ideology of Democracy," in *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*, edited by Yves Mény and Yves Surel (New York: Palgrave, 2002): 26.

of Athenian citizens sitting and judging in the courts, created the ideal forum for the implementation of populist strategies. In particular, the main focus will be on the most 'political' of legal actions, namely the actions against inexpedient laws and illegal proposals. It will be shown that litigants consciously aim to establish concord with the homogeneous group of judges-People, which is the nodal point of their rhetoric, by demonstrating their adherence to common values and shared norms. Judges are presented as the embodiment of the eternal, transcendent Athenian demos. Subsequently, this interpellation of the Athenian judges-People and the identification of the speaker with them[11], forms the basis for the alienation of the opponent, who is presented as an outsider, disrespectful of Athenian values, enemy of the People, the laws, and the democracy[12].

Securing the Good Will of the Audience

In the antagonistic setting of Athenian courtrooms, litigants strove to win at all costs. Despite the (sometimes, unclear and flexible) rules and procedures of Athenian law promoting a more objective administration of justice[13], securing the good will of the audience was crucial[14]. From the prooemium to the epilogue, speakers aimed at establishing concord with their hearers[15], simultaneously undermining their opponent's credibility. According to Aristotle, this good will may reach its climax and imitate 'friendship' and, with the speaker's aggressive and antipluralist prompting, the audience is induced to more passionate and partial responses.[16] Although this was prohibited by the Heliastic oath taken by all Athenian judges (Dem. 24.151), the mere presence of such a clause reveals the existence of the problem. The most characteristic example comes from a speech

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11. For examples of such identification of the speaker with the audience, see Dem. 18.281, 287, 292-3; 20.4, 14; 23.6, 163-6, 173-4, 184, 194; 24.24, 38.

12. Vasileios Adamidis, Character Evidence in the Courts of Classical Athens: Rhetoric, Relevance and the Rule of Law, (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), chapter 5.

13. Edward M. Harris, *The Rule of Law in Action in Democratic Athens*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

14. On securing the good will (eunoia) of the audience, see Adamidis, *Character Evidence*, 209. Reference to public services (liturgies) was also an evidently effective tactic to ask for the gratitude (*charis*) or for the good will of the people, see Vasileios Adamidis, "The Relevance of Liturgies in the Courts of Classical Athens," *Athens Journal of History* 3, no. 2 (2017): 85-96.

15. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1167a–b; Aristotle *Rhet*oric 1378a19; cf. Arist. *Nic. Eth.* 1166b33 where good will is described as 'less intense *philia*'; William Fortenbaugh, "Aristotle on Persuasion through Character", *Rhetorica*, 10, no. 3 (1992): 219–220.

16. For a study of such responses in the courts, see Victor Bers, "Dikastic Thorubos", *History of Political Thought* 6, no. 1/2 (Summer 1985): 1-15.

delivered by Apollodorus (Dem. 45) against Stephanus for false testimony. Apollodorus says that his opponent

> "made such an impression on the jury that they refused to hear a single word from me: I was fined one sixth of the amount claimed, was denied the right of a hearing, and was treated with such contumely as I doubt if any other man ever was, and I went from the court, men of Athens, taking the matter bitterly and grievously to heart."[17]

Although such episodes may be described as "aberrations from the norm" where the court "have yielded to emotional appeals and failed to perform their duty of upholding the law"[18], they nonetheless highlight the untypical emergence of passionate good will towards one of the parties, leading to antipluralism and reaching the extent of prejudice. In order to achieve this end, litigants resorted to strategies which, in modern discourse, could be described as 'populist'. These include the interpellation of the audience (the People) in a single, homogeneous, group by reference to common shared values, flattering them as pure, misled, and unaccountable[19] and, then, pitting them against the marginalized opponent. For example, Hyperides, in *Against Demosthenes*, says that:

> "The People have always treated <us politicians in this way>: although stripped of their own crown by fortune, they have not stripped us of the one they awarded. When the people have behaved towards us in this way, shouldn't we render all the service that is rightfully due them and, if need be, die for them? But you <acted> against the interests of the people."[20]

Treating the people as the nodal point and flattering them[21] was a safe way to ask for their good will. For this tactic to be effective, the interpellation of this group as homogeneous and pure was a prerequisite.

Interpellation of the 'People'

In Athenian forensic speeches, it is not uncommon for litigants to refer to the judges as to one single unit, all belonging in the same group; as if the same people who sit in the court judging the particular case, also sit in the Assembly during

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17. Demosthenes (speech) 45 (section) 6, to be cited as Dem. 45.6.
18. Edward M. Harris, "Law and Oratory," in *Persuasion: Greek Rhetoric in Action*, ed. Ian Worthington, (London: Routledge, 1994), 137.
19. Dem. 18.208, 18.277; Dem. 22.11; 23.97; Aeschines (to be cited as Aes.) 3.142, 3.231.
20. Hyperides (to be cited as Hyp.) 5.30.
21. E.g. Hyp. 4.33.

any (past or future) debate, exhibiting the same behavioral traits and characteristics[22]. Judges are addressed in the second person plural, being distinguished from other groups such as the generals and politicians. For example, in Hyperides 5, fr. 6 it is said: "Gentlemen of the jury, you readily allow the generals and politicians to make large profits, not because the laws grant them this right but because of your indulgence and generosity." Demosthenes uses similar arguments referring to a homogeneous group mentality[23] and suggests that his opponents have gotten "you [Athenian people] into the habit of losing confidence in yourselves and admiring one or two men."[24]

The People sitting in court are presented as the nodal point of Athenian politics. This is characteristic of modern populist rhetoric[25], yet in the direct democracy of Athens it was certainly true in its most literal sense. There, every proposal, by law, had to promote the best interests of the people. Legal actions could be brought for misleading the Athenian demos[26] which had the ultimate decision-making power in the Assembly. Also, the segment of the demos sitting in court had the power of a final, unappealable, verdict. Hyperides, acknowledging this fact, criticizes his opponent Philippides for not treating the

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22. The extent to which the judges sitting in courts represented the demos of the Athenians has caused some controversy, though it is likely that judges were mainly taken as representing the demos; on the relevance of synecdoche for relations between the demos and smaller groups representing it, see Josiah Ober, *The Athenian Revolution: Essays on Ancient Greek Democracy and Political Theory*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996): 118-9; cf. Paul Cartledge, *Democracy: A Life*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016): 17. However, judges swore an oath individually (the Heliastic oath) and voted individually. See A.J.L. Blanshard, "What Counts as the demos? Some Notes on the Relationship between the Jury and "The People" in Classical Athens," *Phoenix* 58 (2004): 32.

23. Dem. 23.206.

24. Dem. 23.210; cf. Aes. 3.178.

25. Yiannis Stavrakakis & Georgios Katsambekis, 'Left-wing populism in the European periphery: the case of SYRIZA' in *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 19.2 (2014), 119-142.

26. I use the 'People' and the 'Demos' interchangeably, although the latter might be seen as a more clearly and restrictively delineated group. In modern discourse, the 'People' refers to a homogeneous, almost transcendent, group which might include people with no right to vote, such as minors and immigrants (although the latter are usually – in Right wing populist rhetoric - presented as outsiders who assist in the binary definition of the 'People'). The 'Demos' on the other hand was a group clearly defined by law and, thus, its interpellation was easier. Yet, appeals to the 'Demos' in Athens shared many common features with appeals to the 'People' in modern populist discourse. Cf. references to the demos in the *Athenaion Politeia*, in the Old Oligarch ([Pseudo-Xenophon], *Constitution of the Athenians)* and in Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, usually describe a rigid polarization between the nobles and the mass of the people, the latter term referring to the unprivileged (Peter J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 88, 97.

People as the nodal and powerful point of Athenian politics; instead, he says, Philippides chose to affiliate himself with their enemies:

> "For you have not laid up for yourself any good will with the people of Athens but have invested elsewhere, and you thought of flattering only those who strike fear in the people, not those who now have the power to save you."[27]

The people, frequently referred to as the 'Many' (bringing in mind the modern populist discourse), have emerged since the fifth century as the dominant unit of Athenian politics[28]. The democracy could be defined, in Aristotle's words, as the rule of the 'Many', predominantly poor, now interpellated in one single unit[29]. This was reflected in the forensic rhetoric too. Demosthenes, in order both to create a sense of group identity among the judges and to convince them to decide against the honors proposed for the general Charidemus by his opponent, has the speaker saying that "in the past the city was wealthy and famous in public, but no one in private rose above the *Many*"[30] before criticizing the current state of affairs whereby the few enrich themselves at the expense of the people. The 'Many' are pure and unaccountable; they are deceived by the shrewd politicians[31].

A further method that speakers implemented for interpellating the People was to create the fiction that the segment of the demos before them was part of an abstract, timeless, and transcendent Athenian demos. Aeschines, says to the judges: "I shall provide *your* law, which you passed with the intention…",[32] as if it

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27. Hyp. 2.7; cf. Hyp. 4.29-30.

28. Thucydides (2.37), in the Funeral Oration delivered in honor of the Athenian war dead, has Pericles saying that the 'constitution is called a democracy because we govern in the interests of the majority, not just the few'. Cf. references to the *demos* as the Many in pseudo-Xenophon's [*Ath. Pol.*]. Despite their regular bias, ancient sources usually describe a rigid polarisation between the nobles and the mass of the people with the term *demos* referring, as a norm, to the unprivileged; see Peter J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Atlenaion Politeia,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981): 88, 97; cf. Martin Ostwald, *From Popular Sovereignty to the Sovereignty of the Law: Law, Society, and Politics in Fifth-Century Athens,* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1986); W.R. Connor, *The New Politicians of Fifth-Century Athens,* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971).

29. Aristotle *Politics* 1292a11. For manifestations of populism in late fifth century Athens, see Vasileios Adamidis, 'Manifestations of populism in late 5th century Athens', in *New studies in law and* history, eds. David. A. Frenkel & Norbert Varga, (Athens: Athens Institute for Education and Research, 2019), 11-28.

30. Dem. 23.206.

31. Dem. 23.97.

32. Aes. 3.14.

was the same people who voted for this law in the Assembly[33]. Similarly, Demosthenes addresses the judges before him as if they were the ones who took certain decisions in the Assembly in the past[34]. In another case, Demosthenes, compares the heroic achievements of previous generations with those of the current one, referring to the latter as being accomplished by the people before him in the court:

> "That is how *your* ancestors acted, and that is how *you* older men acted when the Thebans defeated the Spartans at Leuctra and tried to destroy them. *You* prevented it…*You* did not fear the power and reputation of Thebans…*you* showed all Greeks that when someone wrongs *you* in public policy *you* should look to the standards of *your* forebears"[35].

Such references were not always the case as, at times, speakers distinguish between the different sets of men taking the decisions. Yet, they still refer to them as a homogeneous group that should behave as belonging to the timeless group of Athenian citizens:

> "Even if it was one set of men who were saved and granted the exemption, but *you*, who are the ones now taking it away, constitute a *different* group, that does not remove the stain on *your* reputation"[36].

This brings us to the next point which is the putative ethical homogeneity among the generations of the timeless Athenian demos. References to the Athenian ancestors were frequent and, inter alia, served the objective of the further interpellation of the group. Speakers present themselves as adhering to these values, which the opponent subverts, urging the judges to demonstrate their loyalty to their ancestors and the Athenian tradition by punishing the dissenter[37]. Demosthenes, defending his record of policy proposals, argues that these aligned with the practices of the ancestors that shaped the Athenian character. Referring to various incidents of the distant and recent past[38] that reveal the disposition of the Athenians[39], justifies his policies by arguing that: "Since I had seen so many instances of this kind where the city was ready to fight

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33. Cf. Aes. 3.37, 3.232.
34. Dem. 20.12.
35. Dem. 18.98-99; cf. 18.96; Dem. 20.60, 20.68, 20.72, 20.86, 20.109; 22.6, 22.10. For the rhetorical techniques followed by the Attic orators when using examples from the past, see Giulia Maltagliati, "Persuasion through proximity (and distance) in the Attic orators' Historical Examples," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 60, No. 1 (2020): 68-97.
36. Dem. 20.47.
37. Aes. 3.112, 3.231.
38. Dem. 18.96-101.
39. Dem. 18.100.

for the interests of others, what was I to urge the city to do, what was I to advise?"[40] Ancestors, judges and Demosthenes adhere to common values, while Aeschines, who criticized Demosthenes for these policies, stands on the opposite side.

Speakers, appealing for conformity with the practices of the past that made Athens great, invite the audience not to deviate from their ancestors' tradition[41]. Aeschines, advising the audience not to honor Demosthenes by awarding him a crown for exceptional services to the city, contrasts the ancestral practices to the current situation:

> "If anyone were to ask you whether in your opinion the city is more renowned at the present time or in our ancestors' time, you would all agree that it was in our ancestors' time. And were men better then or now? Then they were outstanding, now they are far inferior. And were the awards and crowns and proclamations and free meals in the Prytaneum more plentiful then than now? In those days distinctions were scarce in our city, and the name of virtue was an honor. Now the whole practice has been completely discredited, and you give crowns out of habit, not on purpose"[42].

The invocation of political ideals could further assist in the interpellation. Adherence to the rule of law was a widely acknowledged Athenian value stemming from the Athenian tradition. Demosthenes says that

> "our ancestors founded this court of law not so that we litigants could gather you together and then hurl the proscribed slurs at each other for personal reasons but to convict someone who may have committed a crime against the city. Aeschines knows this as well as I, yet rather than accuse, he has chosen to abuse"[43].

Once again, the values and norms of the homogeneous Athenian demos are respected by the speaker, thus establishing concord[44] and demonstrating loyalty to the ancestral institutions, while alienating the opponent who abuses and subverts Athenian tradition[45].

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40. Dem. 18.101.

41 Tradition as a type of legal argument is discussed in Wilson Huhn, *The Five Types of Legal Argument*, (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2014): 45-50.

42. Aes. 3.178; for a very similar argument, cf. Dem. 23.196, 23.204, 23.211.

43. Dem. 18.123-4.

44. Dem 18.280.

45. This establishment of concord in order to provoke the friendly disposition of the audience is also suggested by Aristotle (e.g. *Rhetoric* 1381a, *Nic. Eth.* 1167a–b). This technique, aiming at the establishment of a special relationship of concord and unanimity between the speaker and the audience, is evident from Homer onwards. Although it is not

Another frequently invoked part of the Athenian legal tradition was the persona of the 'lawgiver'[46]. Orators often resort to the authority of the lawgivers of the past, a *topos* of Athenian oratory, in order to support their case[47]. References to Solon and Draco reveal the timelessness and merit of Athenian laws, making each verdict of historical importance[48]. Judges, envisaged as representatives of the timeless and transcendent demos, stand in the court of history before the persona of the glorified lawgivers. Being the expressers and interpreters of the lawgivers' intent, judges belong to a venerated group with shared identity and values. Credit is reserved for the lawgivers, not for any public service except that they enacted beneficial and well-conceived statutes[49], these being the 'currency of the state' and, therefore, if anyone debased that currency and introduced counterfeit, the court had graver reason to abhor and punish that man[50]. With a single argument, the group of Athenian judges is interpellated, the opponent is alienated and the speaker is presented as the defender of the Athenian values[51]. The authority-figure of the 'ideal lawgiver' demonstrated the ethical coherence of Athenian laws and the legal system's almost mystical continuity through time. This imagined figure impersonated the ethical prototype of the Athenian legal system, persuading the judges to interpret the Athenian laws, as far as possible uniformly, by reference to his demands[52]. As Aeschines urges them to do, combining the authority of the lawgivers with that of the ancestors:

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evident solely in forensic settings (cf. Aristophanes *Wasps*; James F. McGlew, "Speak on my Behalf": Persuasion and Purification in Aristophanes' Wasps", *Arethusa* 37 (2004): 11−36.), it is in the Attic orators that it achieved its perfection (e.g. Antiphon 1.4; Dem. 18.280-1, 18.287,18. 292-3; 20.4, 20.14; 23.6, 23.163-6, 23.173-4, 23.184, 23.194; 24.24, 24.38; cf. Adamidis, *Character Evidence*, chapter 1.

46. Michael Gagarin, "Storytelling about the Lawgiver in the Athenian Orators," *CEA* (2020): 33. On Greek lawgivers, see Szegedy-Maszak, A., "Legends of the Greek Lawgivers," *GRBS* 19 (1978): 199-209; on Solon, see Edward M. Harris, "Solon and the Spirit of the Law in Archaic and Classical Greece," in *Democracy and the Rule of Law in Classical Athens*, edited by E. M. Harris (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 3-29 and Vasileios Adamidis, "Solon the Lawgiver: Inequality of Resources and Equality before the Law," in the *Role of law, human rights and social justice, justice systems, commerce, and law curriculum: selected issues,* edited by David A. Frenkel (Athens: ATINER, 2017): 121-138.

47. E.g. Aes. 3.2, 3.6, 3.22, 3.26, 3.31, 3.33, 3.38; Dem. 20.89-93; 23.27; 24.38.

48. On the historical importance of decisions, see: Aes. 3.6-7, 3.14, 3.108, 3.112, 3.175, 3.178; Dem. 20.12,20. 89-93, 20.135, 20.142, 20.154; 22.35,22. 94-99; 24.38.

49. Dem. 24.211.

50. Dem. 24.213.

51. Cf. Aes. 3.175, Dem. 20.94; 24.38.

52. On the figure of the 'ideal lawgiver' and its implications see Stephen Johnstone, *Disputes and Democracy: the Consequences of Litigation in Ancient Athens* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 25−33; cf. Edward M. Harris, "Solon and the Spirit of the Law in Archaic Athens," in *Democracy and the Rule of Law in Classical Athens: Essays on Law, Society,*

"[i]magine that you [judges] see on the platform where I now stand as I speak the city's benefactors ranged against their [Demosthenes and his supporting speakers] impudence. See Solon, who equipped the democracy with the noblest laws, a philosopher and a worthy legislator, urging you in the restrained manner that befits him under no circumstances to set more value on Demosthenes's arguments than on your oaths and the laws. See Aristides…expressing his anger at the insult to justice…"[53].

Judges, as a group, ought to protect Athenian legal tradition. Demosthenes claims that Timocrates's law "robs the Courts of Justice, which are the pillars of the constitution, of all power to impose the additional penalties attached by the laws to transgressions"[54]. He argues that: "the question for you today is this: shall all the laws *you* have enacted for the restraint of the wrongdoers be invalidated and this law alone be valid?"[55] In support of his argument, Demosthenes highlights the antiquity of these "old-established" and "well-tried" laws[56] which have been repeatedly tested and found advantageous, against the *brand new* law of Timocrates which threatens to destroy them[57]. According to him, "such a lawgiver merits the severest punishment…to prevent another man from coming forward to overthrow the most powerful institutions with a *fresh* statute"[58].

The orators attribute the prosperity of Athens, her liberty, and her democracy to her laws that the judges are asked, as a group, to defend[59]. To the question "what is then the only honest and trustworthy safeguard of the law", Demosthenes replies: "you, the common people"[60]. Judges are frequently reminded to vote in accordance with the law, especially by reference to the Heliastic oath, another institution enforcing the common bonds and shared identity of Athenians[61]. Demosthenes warns the judges that:

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and Politics, ed. Edward M. Harris, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 3–28. I borrowed the notion of the 'authority-figure' from Douglas L. Cairns, *Aidōs: the psychology and ethics of honor and shame in ancient Greek literature* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 39, since I find its application to the Athenian legal system's context with its frequent invocation of the 'ideal lawgiver' suitable.

53. Aes. 3.257-8.
54. Dem. 24.2.
55. Dem. 24.5.
56. Dem. 24.24.
57. Dem. 24.137, 24.142.
58. Dem. 24.153.
59. Dem. 24.5.
60. Dem. 24.37.
61. Careful analysis of the court speeches reveals that references to the Heliastic oath weighed significantly to the minds of the jurors. On the statistics of the Heliastic oath in forensic speeches, see Johnstone, *Disputes and* Democracy, 33–45; Regarding the role and effect of the *dikastic* oath in Athenian courts, see Edward M. Harris, 'The rule of law in Athenian democracy. Reflections on the judicial oath', *Dike* 8 (2008): 157–81, *contra*

"Now, you need to consider whether you value the constitution and the established laws and obedience to your oath as highly as this sum of money. If you are going to acquit a man who has obviously made an illegal proposal in this way, everyone will think you have chosen the sum of money over your laws and obedience to your oath…remember your oath and keep in mind the indictment: the issue now is not about collecting taxes but whether the laws should have authority"[62].

Counter-interpellation, namely uniting the group by denouncing a common enemy, is also evident in the speeches. This common enemy is, naturally, the opponent, who poses a threat to the people and the democracy. Aeschines urges the judges to:

"[h]ate people who draft illegal decrees and regard no offence of this sort as insignificant but attach great importance to every one of them. And you should not allow any man to deprive you of this right, neither the supporting speeches from generals who have been colluding with certain public speakers to harm the constitution, nor the entreaties of foreigners, whom some people bring to stand and so get off free from the courts, even though their political conduct contravenes the laws. No, just as each of you would be ashamed to desert the post assigned to him in war, so now you should feel ashamed to desert the post of guardians of the democracy that the laws have assigned to you today… the whole citizen body has placed the city in your care and entrusted the constitution to you"[63].

Demosthenes, setting boundaries between the citizens and the politicians and clearly designating the two distinct, opposing groups, says that:

"in private life there is such an excessive amount of private wealth belonging to men who conduct public business that they have constructed private houses more impressive than many public buildings, and some have bought up more land than all of you in the court possess…the men who manage our public affairs go from poverty to riches and supply themselves with plentiful livelihood for a long time. But you do not have enough money in the public treasury to supply even a day's travel expenses. In the past, the people were the master of the politicians but now they are their servants. The people who propose decrees like this one are responsible…"[64].

Matthew R. Christ, *The Litigious Athenian* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 194–6.

62. Dem. 20.45-46.
63. Aes. 3.6-7.
64. Dem. 23.208-9; cf. Hyp. 4.36-8.

The two groups were clearly distinguished: on the one hand, the pure People, interpellated by reference to noble objectives and shared values; on the other, the opponent, quite often presented as a member of the political or economic establishment[65]. The ground was paved for the second part of the populist rhetorical strategy.

Divisive/Antagonistic Rhetoric

The interpellation of the 'pure' People was the first step for the implementation of the populist rhetorical strategy of litigants. Defining and setting the criteria for the membership of this group, allowed the speaker to indicate adherents and outsiders[66]. The relationship between them represents an antagonistic struggle on a 'friends and enemies' basis (the populist cosmology), in accordance with Carl Schmitt's influential distinction.[67] The ultimate objective was, following a binary and Manichaeistic tactic, the exclusion of the opponent from the interpellated group. Following the interpellation which was given effect by reference to the shared, traditional values and norms, the opponent is accused of disrespecting and subverting them.

The most characteristic type of populist division is setting the common people against the political elite. Although the term *rhetor* (usually translated as 'public speaker' or 'politician' to conform to modern politics) could be used either in a neutral or in a negative way depending on the speaker's viewpoint[68], the division between People and politicians is particularly evident in actions against illegal proposals where the accuser points to this capacity of the proposer. Hyperides suggests that such a division is envisaged by the law itself[69] and argues for its validity throughout the speech[70]. Euxenippus, on whose behalf Hyperides speaks, is presented as a common citizen in order to be distinguished

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65. Hyp. 4.32; Dem. 18.109; 20.1, 20.157; 22.42, 22.59.

66. The essential features of the populist ontology involve 'the people' and 'the out-group(s)'. See Paul Taggart, "Populism and 'Unpolitics'," in *Populism and the Crisis of Democracy*, *Vol. 1: Concepts and Theory*, edited by G. Fitzi, J. Mackert, and B.S. Turner, (Lonsycopdon: Routledge, 2018): 79-80.

67. Carlos De La Torre and O. Mazzoleni, "Do We Need a Minimum Definition of Populism? An Appraisal of Mudde's Conceptualization," *Populism* 2, no. 1 (2020): 81-82.

68. Compare Dem. 24, written in 353 B.C.E. when Demosthenes was still at a young age, with Dem. 18 where Demosthenes defends his lifetime's career as a statesman. Cf. Mogens H. Hansen, "The Athenian 'Politicians', 403-322 B.C.," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 24 (1983): 33-55; *Dinarchus, Hyperides, and Lycurgus*, Translated by Ian Worthington, Craig Cooper and Edward M. Harris, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001), 104, n.4.

69. Hyp. 4.4, 4.8.

70. Hyp. 4.36-8; cf. 5.12; cf. Hyp. fr. 80.

from the *rhetores*[71]. It was certainly immoral for the prosecutor, Polyeuctus, to "prosecute private citizens…but [he] should prosecute a politician…or impeach a general"[72].

Aeschines, refers to a "group that views politics as no longer a public activity but their own private preserve", scheming "to enslave ordinary men and maintain their own despotic power"[73]. In order to create a rift on the opponents' rhetorical strategy, still playing on this – evidently – popular theme, he says that Ctesiphon, the accused, "says that he is not afraid on his own account (he says he expects to be seen as an ordinary man (ἰδιώτης), but that what makes him afraid is Demosthenes's venality in political life"[74] who, not missing a single day to engage in politics has marked himself as a "professional and a hireling"[75]. Judges should follow their ancestors' practice who "gave the credit for the glorious and brilliant achievements to the people but blamed humiliations and failures on shabby politicians"[76]. Otherwise, the judge, when he leaves the court, will realize that he:

> "[w]ill have weakened himself and strengthened the politician. In a democratic city, the ordinary man has a king's power through the law and his vote… The fact that in the present circumstances, you the Many are abandoning the bastions of democracy to the Few, I cannot approve…Won't you keep the politicians under your control?"[77]

Unsurprisingly, given the popularity of this rhetoric, Demosthenes resorts to similar argumentation when it suits his aims. Replying to Aeschines, conforming to the populist 'anti-politicians' rhetoric, he says that:

> "[h]e calls me a skillful speaker, a sorcerer, a sophist, and other such names. He hopes that by preemptively ascribing his own attributes to another, this description will be accepted, and the audience will not consider any further what kind of person is saying these things"[78].

In *Against Androtion* Demosthenes argues against the group of men who are eloquent and bold, mislead the people and might try to overthrow the democracy[79]. He advises the judges:

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71. Hyp. 4.13.
72. Hyp. 4.27.
73. Aes. 3.3, 3.20.
74. Aes. 3.214.
75. Aes. 3.220; cf. Dem. 22.4, 22.25, 22.32; 23.5.
76. Aes. 3.231; cf. Dem. 23.199.
77. Aes. 3.231-5.
78. Dem. 18.276.
79. Dem. 22.31-2.

"[i]f you acquit, the Council house will fall into the hands of those who make speeches, but if you convict, into the hands of ordinary citizens…If this will happen and you get rid of the usual gang of orators, you will see everything works as it should, men of Athens"[80].

In *Against Aristocrates*, Demosthenes has Euthycles saying that "you would be justified, men of Athens, in paying attention to me and to listening favorably to what I say. I am not one of those people who pester you, nor am I one of those politicians who enjoy your confidence"[81]. It is the politicians who have misled the people, so Euthycles hesitated to bring an action as "even though speaking the truth, I [he] would have less influence than many people telling you lies"[82]. The city has been damaged "because of the depravity of the cursed and god-forsaken politicians ready to propose decrees like this"[83]. In *Against Timocrates*, Demosthenes argues that the people are "far more magnanimous than the politicians"[84] as:

"[p]oliticians rarely let a month go by without legislating to suit their private ends. When in office they are always haling private citizens to jail; but they disapprove of the application of the same measure of justice to themselves…if you [judges] decline to punish the men before you, in a very little time the People will be in slavery to those beasts of prey"[85].

As in modern discourse, politicians (and, naturally, the opponent is presented as such) are presented as corrupt. Inexpedient advice, changes in the attitude, and putatively inconsistent behavior, were all attributed to corruption rather than to a change of mind or circumstances[86]. Referring to the Harpalus affair, Hyperides scolds the Athenian people for allowing "generals and politicians to make large profits"[87] whom Harpalus bribed for political reasons[88]. This was not the first time that Demosthenes was accused of being bribed[89] nor was it surprising that Demosthenes retaliated in the same way[90]. Yet, the centrality of such allegations in the litigants' discourse proves the credibility of such allegations for the Athenian judges. Therefore, having interpellated the

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80. Dem. 22.37.

81. Dem. 23.4; cf. 21.189.

82. Dem. 23.188.

83. Dem. 23.201.

84. Dem. 24.123.

85. Dem. 24.143; cf. 24.155-7, 24.193, 24.198.

86. Adamidis, *Character Evidence*, 121.

87. Hyp. 5.25.

88. Hyp. 5.12, 5.24.

89. Cf. Aes. 3. 92, 3.94, 3.103, 3.113.

90. Dem. 18.49, 18.52, 18.131, 18.284, 18.295-7, 18.307, 18.313, 18.320.

People as a group distinct from politicians and classifying the opponent as such, evidently, was an effective way to marginalize him, which was the ultimate objective.

For this to be achieved, the opponent had to be presented, using – at times – aggressive rhetoric, as an ethical outsider who does not adhere to the values and norms defining the group. Arguing against Ctesiphon, Aeschines urges the Athenians to "hate people who draft illegal decrees"[91] such as his opponent. Ctesiphon (and Demosthenes) aim to "deceive the audience, harm the city, and overthrow the democratic constitution"[92]. When Ctesiphon calls Demosthenes as a supporting speaker, judges:

> "[s]hould not listen to a sophist who thinks he will annul the laws with clever phrases, and none should count it virtuous, when Ctesiphon asks if he may call Demosthenes, to be the first to shout put: "Call him, call him"; you are calling him against yourself, against the laws, against the democratic constitution"[93].

> "As to his tears and his shrill voice, when he asks you: 'Where shall I find refuge, men of Athens? Shut me out of public life and there's nowhere for me to fly', you must answer him in turn: 'And the Athenian people – where are they to find refuge, Demosthenes?'"[94], thus clearly separating Demosthenes from the people[95]. Demosthenes, in turn, claims that it is actually Aeschines who dissents from Athenian practices and should be seen as an outsider: "To be sure, it is not acceptable to try to rob someone of access to the people and the opportunity to address them and especially to do that out of spite and malice – it's not right by god, nor, Athenians, is it just or in accord with civic practice"[96].

Aeschines should actually be seen as the "prototype of ethical outsider of Athenian courts"[97], namely as a sycophant[98], and may he "be destroyed, first of all, by the gods but also by all these people, since you are [he is] a miserable citizen and a miserable bit-part actor"[99]. He should be regarded as an outsider since "the valuable thing is not a politician's words or the quality of his voice, but his pursuit of the same policy as the masses and his having the same friends and

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91. Aes. 3.7.
92. Aes. 3.200.
93. Aes. 3.202.
94. Aes. 3.209.
95. Cf. Hyp. 5.12.
96. Dem. 18.13; cf. 18.34; pace Dem. 24.171.
97. Adamidis, *Character Evidence*, 186 with n. 109; cf. Christ, *Litigious Athenian*, 50ff.
98. Dem. 18.112-3; cf. 18.121-6.
99. Dem. 18.267.

enemies as his country"[100]. Similarly, Hyperides attacks Philippides because he "had not laid up for yourself [himself] any good will with the people of Athens…condemned to death this ancient city…kept a close watch on the city's fortunes, to see whether an opportunity might arise to say or do anything against the people"[101]. Acting undemocratically, disrespecting the sovereignty of the people, "he thinks that he can give the people orders"[102]. The binary was present; boundaries were clearly designated and the division between the homogeneous people and the opponent-politician was highlighted.

In this division, the opponent was presented as not adhering to those venerated values that defined the identity of the interpellated group. Demosthenes's speech *Against Timocrates* in an action against a putatively inexpedient law is indicative: Timocrates goes against the courts, the laws, the democracy, the city, the people, and the lawgivers, namely the foundations of Athenian identity. His proposed law "robs the *Courts* of Justice, which are the pillars of the constitution, of their powers"[103] and has their verdicts overruled[104]. It invalidates "all the *laws* that you [People] have enacted for the restraint of evildoers"[105]. It is "inconsistent with all existing *statutes*"[106], so Demosthenes is wondering "how, indeed, could any private person ill-treat the State more gravely than by *subverting the laws* by which the State is administered?"[107] Such a person is an enemy of the *people* and the *democracy*[108]; he deserves to suffer any punishment as an opponent of the *city*[109]. Obviously, such a lawgiver as Timocrates, has nothing in common with wise Athenian *lawgivers* like Solon[110] or his laws that he tries to repeal[111]. Throughout the speech, Timocrates is portrayed as an outsider, a person who does not respect the values, traditions, and norms of the interpellated group of the Athenian people. This rhetorical technique can be further illustrated by reference to passages placing the opponent in opposition to the *ancestors*[112], the *oaths*[113] and even the *gods*[114]. The objective, nonetheless,

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100. Dem. 18.280.

101. Hyp. 2.7-8.

102. Hyp. 2.10; cf. Hyp. 4.20.

103. Dem. 24.2; for a similar argument pitting the opponent against the court, see Aes. 3.53.

104. Dem. 24.73.

105. Dem. 24.5.

106. Dem. 24.33.

107. Dem. 24.31; for a similar rhetorical technique, namely alienating the opponent from the audience by pitting him against the laws, see Aes. 3.4, 3.8, 3.16, 3.31, 3.35-7; Dem. 22.7, 22.11, 22.32, 22.45; 23.34, 23.62.

108. Dem. 24.57; cf. Dem. 22.32; 23.3, 23.98, 23.151, 23.185-8, 199; Aes. 3.8, 3.200, 3.209.

109. Dem. 24.95; cf. Hyp. 2.7-8.

110. Dem. 24.55, 24.103-6.

111. Dem. 24.142; for similar arguments pitting the opponent against the lawgivers, see Dem. 20.103, 20.158; 22.31; 23.73, 23.89; cf. Aes. 3.11.

112. Dem. 23.70.

remains the same: excluding the opponent from the homogenous and ethically coherent People, marginalizing and alienating him in a Manichaeistic way, presenting him as a subverter of the foundations of the Athenian identity and values.

Conclusions

The rhetorical strategies of Athenian litigants shared common characteristics with modern populist discourse, whose main aim is to present a fictitious division between an artfully created pure and homogeneous People and an evil 'out-group'. References of the litigants to the dicasts as a segment of the morally pure and homogeneous Athenian demos aimed at securing their good will and establish concord. Speakers demonstrated their adherence to the traditional norms which defined Athenian identity, thus identifying themselves with the morally upright audience.

The group of dicasts was presented as an integral part of the abstract and timeless Athenian demos whose interests were endangered by the opponent. The veneration of the populace and the clear dichotomy between adherents and outsiders, achieved by artful rhetoric, paved the ground for the marginalization of the opponent who was presented as an outsider, dangerous for the values and the integrity of the group. In practical terms, aggressive and anti-pluralist rhetoric aimed at the incitement of *thorubos*, which impeded the opponent from stating his case. This Manichaeistic approach of Athenian litigants, similar to the rhetorical strategies employed in modern populism, can certainly enlighten students of modern political, especially populist, discourse.

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113. Dem. 20.167; Aes. 3.208.
114. Aes. 3.130; Dem. 18.267.

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Solo Singing Etiquette for Women in Ancient and Modern Egypt

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Throughout the ages, people have shown great interest in music and singing of all kinds, giving these expressive forms great importance in different eras. This article aims to comprehensively overview the etiquette, customs, and characteristic rules of polite performance in the profession of female solo singing in ancient and modern Egypt from a comparative view. This is achieved by reviewing the distinctive themes of female solo singers and their contexts in both ancient and modern Egypt. The article employs a descriptive-comparative methodology to provide a detailed sequential investigation and analysis of all the data collected on the subject and the themes of female solo singers; to discern the characteristic features of female solo singing etiquette in ancient Egypt; and to identify the similarities and differences of these features in the masters and famous models of modern Egypt. One of the main findings is that the distinctive characteristics of female solo singing in ancient Egypt have been inherited in the style of oriental but not western singing, and the greatest and most widely known model of the former style is "the Oriental singing lady Umm Kulthum".

Introduction

Music has played a role in various social fields from ancient to modern Egypt. In ancient Egypt, singing was practiced in both public and private places: in temples, in palaces, during religious processions and burials as part of the funerary cult, and during private festivals and military parades. There were at least twelve musical specialties in ancient Egypt, and singing was one of the main categories[1]. In modern Egypt singing has been widespread and influential since the Early Arab Period, and the *Majalis al-Ghina'* (assemblies of singing and music) of the Umayyad era have been mentioned in several sources. In addition, many sources have stated that there were many singing assemblies in the Abbasid era[2]. The Tulunids also encouraged singing; where the walls were decorated with many drawings of female singers[3]. The Ikhshidis were also fond

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1. The 12 categories were singing and playing harp, lute, lyre, long flute, oboe, double oboe, double clarinet, trumpet, tambourine, percussion instruments, and rhythm instruments (Emerit Sibylle, *Music and Musicians*, UCLA, *Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 2013), 9).
2. Al Asfahany, Abu El Farag, *Ketab El Aghany*, vol. I (Cairo: Dar El Kotob, 1992), 13-14.
3. Al Maqrizi, *Al Mawaz wa El Etbar Bi Zikr El Khitat wa Al Athar*, vol. I (Cairo: Bolak press, 1854), 316.

of singing and dancing[4]. In the Fatimid era, people, whether rulers or commoners, were interested in the art of singing, entertainment, fun, and worldly pleasures, as singing and dancing assemblies were a feature of palace life. During the Ayubbid period, most of the female singers mentioned performed during the reign of Al-Kamel[5]. The Mamluk sultans and their emirs, as the ruling class, also spared no effort in attending performances by female singers[6] or building *al-Maghani*[7].

The slow modernization during Ottoman rule in Egypt after 1517 AD contributed to the dramatic decline in most aspects of artistic and cultural life until the advent of the French campaign. This campaign brought Western civilization with it, including the West's social, economic, and political programmes, which had a clear impact on the fields of science, the arts, politics, administration and others. Egypt subsequently began to keep pace with the surrounding cultures. This period witnessed the emergence of "*Awalim*", or female entertainers (professional female singers and dancers), of which there were two types. The first were those who behaved decently and commanded respect, while the second were those who were downtrodden and whose behaviour was vulgar and devoid of modesty[8]. The other kind of *Awalim* included common dancers who did not have any traditions and whose voices had no charm or harmony.

After the departure of the French and Mohamed Ali's accession to the throne, Egypt began its political project, through which Muhammad Ali sought to bring the civilization of Europe to Egypt. The musical Renaissance in Egypt began in the reign of Muhammad Ali Pasha, for he established a school in Jihad Abad village to teach music, along with schools in the Athar al-Nabi and al-Qal'a districts[9]. At the public level, there were various occasions that included singing and music, such as mawlids, wedding parties, and Sebou' (a celebration

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4. Saydia El kashef, *Masr fi Ahd El Ekhshdeen*, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Matbact Fouad I, 1970), 275.

5. Nabil Mohamed Abd El Azeez, *El Tarab wa Alatoh fi Asr El Aybeen*, (Cairo: Al Matbaca Al Fania Al hadetha, 1980), 22 Al Kamel was the fifth king of the Ayyubid dynasty and ruled from 1218 AD to 1238 AD. Al-Kamel Mohammed was a profound scholar of literature, poetry, and the arts of Hadith and was also a patron of music and singers during his reign.

6. Mohamed Qandeel El Baqali, *El Tarab fi Al Asr Al Mamlukee* (Cairo: El Haeah Al Masria Al amah Ll Ketab, 1984), 44.

7. Al-Maghani refers to halls dedicated to entertaining dancing and to singing and music performances by women in particular.

8. Vollito, translated by Zoheer El Shaaeb, *Wasf Masr, Al Mosiqa wa Al Ghenaa cnd Al Masreen Al Mohdeetheen*, Vol VIII (Cairo: Al Heaha Al Masria Al amah LL Ketab, 2002), 156-155

9. T*he book of the first Arab Music Conference held in Cairo 1932* (Cairo: Al Matbaca Al America, 1933), 16

held seven days after a child is born). Women's roles were more colourful than men's, and parties were held for women at home that men could not attend.

Little attention has been devoted to the history of female solo singing in Egypt. The article argues that the distinctive characteristics of female solo singing in ancient Egypt have been inherited in the style of oriental singing in particular.

In ancient Egypt during the Old Kingdom, there were certain forms of musical performance for chants or hymns:[10]

1. Solo singing.
2. Responsorial singing (in which a liturgical chant is recited in parts with a congregational response between each part).
3. Antiphonal singing or singing with a chorus (singing, recitation, or playing alternately by two groups). The chorus was a large organized group of singers.

Two of the three previous forms of musical performance are considered group singing, while just one form represents solo singing, which we focus on in the article.

Music schools for women existed in ancient Egypt, as some sort of institutional teaching was given within the royal court or temples.[11] The texts did not clearly mention that there were independent schools for teaching the form of solo singing in particular, in spite there were several themes for the female solo singer that appeared on the walls of the ancient Egyptian tombs from the Old till the New Kingdom periods. There was a school for female singers at Memphis according to one of the Anastasi Papyri in the British Museum. Girls from higher rank or elite families typically received specialized knowledge of ritual music and training in singing by instructors known by the title *Sba* (meaning "teacher"), for example, *Rawer* of the Old Kingdom was a "*Sba ḥsww nswt teacher of the royal singers*"[12], and *Khesuwer* of the Middle Kingdom acted as the "*Instructor of Singers*".[13] During the reign of king Akhenaten, in

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10. Rafael Pérez Arroyo, *La Música en la era de las pirámides* (Madrid: Ediciones Centro de Estudios Egipcios, 2001), 120.

11. Emerit Sibylle, *Music and Musicians*, 9.

12. Jeffrey Pulver, "The Music of Ancient Egypt", in *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 48th Sess., (1921 - 1922), 34; Adolf Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, translated by H. M. Tirard (London: Macmillan, 1894), 252.

13. Several scenes on the walls of ancient Egyptian tombs belonging to musicians show them with their female students. Khesuwer appeared on the walls of his tomb at Kom el-Hisn giving lessons in sistrum playing and hand clapping (Katharina Zinn, "Education, Pharaonic Egypt", in *The Encyclopaedia of Ancient History*, First Edition, Edited by Roger S. Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige B. Champion, Andrew Erskine, and Sabine R. Huebner, (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing, 2013), 2319).

the New Kingdom, there was a Theban school of music that was considered to be the Egyptian Royal Academy of Music.[14]

The female students would have important musical professions as *"Overseer of Female Singers"*, for example, a singer called *Hemetre* reached a high-ranking position at the end of the 5th Dynasty in the Old Kingdom, as she was able to usurp tomb No. 6 at Saqqara from *Ty* the *"wᶜb priest of Ra in the sun temple of king Sahure"*.[15]

As well as in modern Egypt, women music, singing and dancing professionals were supervised by a woman known as "*Daminat al-Maghani*", who collected taxes from them and from other women working in other professions. She was also responsible for the female preachers, readers of the Qur'an and mourners. Therefore, it can be said that female singers as a group had no syndicate because such a position required a just knowledge seeker well aware of his position, talented in singing and professional in discriminating good voices. Hence, the role of a Daminat al-Maghani was to follow the doings of female singers and provide them with training and education. In addition, they worked to introduce them to lute players[16].

As noted earlier, Daminat Al-Maghani had the same role as the Instructor of Singers in ancient Egypt. Actually, in both ancient and modern Egypt, teaching singing to women was a common act. Society was accepting of the practice, and Egyptians regarded the female singer as an excellent performer who should be encouraged.

This acceptance reflects the importance of female singers in Egyptian history, as the government allowed the teaching of singing to women, and this was not forbidden under Islamic law.

Categories of Female Singers

There were many categories of solo singers in Egypt. Firstly, in ancient Egypt, one of these categories was the temple singer (religious singer), who participated in ceremonies by chanting hymns and prayers during festivals and daily rituals in honour of the god of the temple. For example, *"Sha-Amum-em-su"* was a singer priestess in the temple of god Amun at Karnak (Figure 1). She belonged to the feminine elite of temple singers. She was part of the main group of singers at Karnak, called *heset*. These were lead singers who were sometimes accompanied by a choir of women. The temple singers were not

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14. Jeffrey Pulver, *The Music of Ancient Egypt*, 39.

15. Katharina Zinn, *Education, Pharaonic Egypt*, 2319.

16. Mervat Othman Hassan, Taefat Al Maghany fi Al Asr Al Mamlwkee, *AnISI* 43(2010), 384.

obliged to be in the temple all the time. Many participated only in ceremonies such as the annual Opet and Valley festivals of the god Amun.[17]
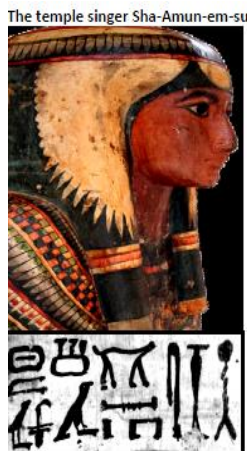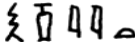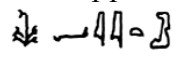

Figure 1. *"Sha-Amum-em-su" a Singer Priestess in the Temple of God Amun at Karnak*
Source: SESHAT, Brazilian Research Group in Egyptian Archaeology, Laboratório de Egiptologia do Museu Nacional/UFRJ)

The female singer was an important member of the staff of the temple. She was described as *"the one who pacifies the god with a sweet voice"*. The earliest evidence of temple singers dates to the beginning of the Old Kingdom period. Only women filled this role, and their main title was *Hsy.t* 𓏠𓊨𓏭𓏛 *"singer"*.[18] Many of them were members of an institution called *Khener*, which was a professional troupe of singers and dancers associated with certain deities. Such troupes could be found in palaces, temples, and large private households and performed in both religious and secular contexts. They were organized into certain groups under the supervision of several overseers, either male or female.[19]

A new class of female temple singers had appeared by the late Middle Kingdom period. They were called *šmꜥy.t* 𓈙𓌳𓏭𓏏𓏮 *"Musician"*.[20] During the New Kingdom in the 18th Dynasty, female singers were from elite families and were married to priests, while in the 19th and 20th Dynasties they were from humble families and were married to scribes, laundrymen, or military men. In the 3rd Intermediate Period, female temple singers were from the highest social class. A temple singer could be a princess or a daughter of the

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17. SESHAT, Brazilian Research Group in Egyptian Archaeology, Laboratório de Egiptologia do Museu Nacional/UFRJ, 1-2.
18. William A. Ward, *Essays on Feminine Titles of the Middle Kingdom and Related Subjects* (Lebanon: the American University of Beirut, 1986), 12.
19. Ibid, 77.
20. Ibid, 19.

mayor of Thebes.The profession of temple singer continued during the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods.[21]

The 3rd Intermediate Period represents the transitional period between Libyan, Kushite and Saite domination of Egypt, a time of major political and cultural changes. This period of dynamic changes broke the boundaries in front of individual and groups of non-royal elite women and provided them a less restrictive atmosphere to show aspects of their identities free from male control in more powerful and open ways than in the previously periods.[22] Meresamun, a temple singer during the 3rd Intermediate Period, began as a low-ranking singer. She advanced to become a singer inside the temple and eventually occupied the highest rank, namely, the temple singer who sang beside the statue of the main deity of the temple.[23]

The elite women acquired increasing authority and rank by the Third Intermediate Period. At Medinet Habu the burials of *ḥsy.t n ḫnw n pr-ᶜ Imn* "Singers in the Residence of the Temple of Amun" serve as a clear evidence of the independence and rank of women in several ways; from their own single or numerous chamber tombs in their private cemetery to their occupancy of the inner sanctum of the Great Temple of king Ramesses III.[24]

Accordingly, there were singers of two kinds in 13th- and 14th-century Egypt. One group included costly and specially purchased slaves, usually of foreign birth, owned by the nobility and upper class; the other group constituted free popular singers, presumably Egyptians who entertained the masses[25]. It is the latter that are of concern in this article.

The intent of a female singer's performance closely resembles the devotional intent of a private recitation context. In fact, in keeping with traditional Muslim ideals, the professional female reciter is in no sense a public figure. She is neither broadcast over the media nor featured as a personality, nor is she recorded by public or commercial companies. Although some women were known for their recitation and their performances were broadcast to the general public in the 1930s and 1940s, they were also known as singers (the most famous, Umm Kulthum, is focused on in this article). It seems that reciting the Quran has not

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21. Emily Teeter, "Inside the temple: the role and function of temple singers", in *the Life of Meresamun a Temple Singer in Ancient Egypt*, edited by Emily Teeter and Janet H. Johnson, the Oriental Institute Museum Publications, Number 29 (Chicago: the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2009), 25.

22. Jean Li, *Elite Theban Women of the Eighth-Sixth Centuries BCE in Egypt: Identity, Status and Mortuary Practice*, A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in Near Eastern Studies in the Graduate Division of the University of California (California: Berkeley, 2010), 8-9.

23. Emily Teeter, *"Inside the temple: the role and function of temple singers"*, 27.

24. Jean Li, *Elite Theban Women of the Eighth-Sixth Centuries BCE in Egypt*, 131.

25. Edward William Lane, *An Account of Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London: William Clowes and sons, 1860), 66.

been common for women in modern Egypt, in contrast to ancient Egypt, where women sang in the temples of gods (religious singing). Indeed, Kristina Nelson argued for stopping the practice of broadcasting women reciters, suggesting that a women's voice makes one think of things other than Allah.[26]

The Social Status of Female Solo Singers

The position of a female solo singer was highly prestigious from ancient to modern Egypt. In ancient Egypt, the earliest date for the presence of professional solo singers is the mid of the 5th Dynasty in the Old Kingdom period.[27] A scene on the false door of the 5th Dynasty tomb of *Nikaure* at Saqqara shows **Iti**, the first known professional solo singer in ancient Egypt, singing with a female harpist (Figure 1 in Table 1).[28]

Some female solo singers had considerable authority in ancient Egypt. *Sat-tepihu* was a solo singer during the Middle Kingdom. According to a letter found at Lahun, she was requested by name, as one of a group of musicians from the city of Lahun, to go to an unspecified place for an unspecified reason.[29] In another example, a solo singer called *"Herere"* bearing the honourable title *"Great One of the Khener and Singer of Amun-Ra"* wrote sharply to a troop commander ordering him to supply rations for the workmen at Thebes warning him, "Do not let (a certain official) complain to me again".[30]

The female solo singer was among the musicians that celebrated the 30th anniversary of the accession of the king, the Heb-Sed festival. The representation of solo singers is common in the festival scenes of kings Amenhotep III, Amenhotep IV, and Osorkon II.31 For example, a scene in the New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty tomb of Kheruef (TT 192) on the lower register of the west portico south of the doorway shows a woman singing to the sound of a flute during the Heb-Sed festival of king Amenhotep III.[32] (Figure 10 in Table 1).

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26. Kristina Nelson, *The Art of Reciting the Quran* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2001), 203.

27. Lise Manniche, *Music and Musicians in Ancient Egypt* (London: British Museum Press, 1991), 120.

28. Edward Bleiberg (ed.), *Arts and Humanities through the Eras*, vol. 1 (USA: Thomson/ Gale, 2005), 179.

29. William A. Ward, *Essays on Feminine Titles of the Middle Kingdom and Related Subjects* (Lebanon: The American University of Beirut, 1986), 77.

30. Emily Teeter, *"Inside the temple: the role and function of temple singers"*, 27.

31. Suzanne Lynn Onstine, *The Role of the Chantress (Šmcyt) in Ancient Egypt*, PhD Dissertation (Canada: University of Toronto, 2001), 37.

32. Emily Teeter, *"Inside the temple: the role and function of temple singers"*, Figure 14, 25; The Epigraphic Survey in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities in Egypt, *the*

In ancient Egypt the professional female solo singers played a great role in spreading the Egyptian civilization abroad. According to one of the New Kingdom Narratives, an Egyptian female singer was in the voyage of *Unamun* to Syria, where in her way she will introduce her songs and thus spreading the Egyptian music abroad. It was also said that the prince of Byblos, which was a thriving Phoenician city in the 2nd millennium B.C., had obtained for himself an Egyptian female singer.[33]

Based on the above discussion, female singers clearly held a prestigious status in ancient Egypt. Notably, the prestigious status of the female singer continued throughout Egyptian history. During the Mamluk period, no other female singer enjoyed the rivalry between sultans more than "Ittifaq". She enjoyed unequivocal pleasure and luxury unlike that experienced by any other woman of her time".[34] Ittifaq was not the first singer to marry a sultan or a senior prince, as she was preceded by "Ardakin Bint Nokai Bint Qutfan", the female singer who was passionately loved by al-Ashraf Khalil bin Qalawun (1262-1293 AD). The list also includes the female singer Shahd Dar, who was married to al-Maqar al-Shehabi Ahmed bin al-Jay'an, one of the senior Mamluk princes, but she distracted him from managing the kingdom's affairs.[35]

Some female singers had such an influence on the sultans that they were involved in decision-making. For example, "**Dunia Bint al-Aqaba'i al-Damashqiya**" was extremely famous in her time. Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun received her and showed favour to her. Then, she visited al-Malik al-Ashraf Sha'ban bin Hussein bin Mohammed bin Qalawun (1363-1377 AD), who showed great interest in her singing. She became his concubine and was one of the main reasons he dropped the tax imposed upon female singers, which he did at her request.

Other sultans and princes were passionate for female singers, such as prince Anouk ibn al-Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun (1285-1341 AD). He fell in love with a singer called "**Zahra**"[36]. It is worth mentioning that the Mamluk rulers favoured the female over the male singers, as did the public.

Hence, female singers enjoyed a prominent position during the Islamic era, superior even to that gained in ancient Egypt. It is astonishing to learn that Islam did not prevent singing for women and that it was even encouraged by Islamic rulers.

Tomb of Kheruef Theban Tomb 192, Volume 102 (Chicago: the University of Chicago, Oriental Institute Publications, 1980), 24.

33. Adolf Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians Poems, Narratives, and Manuals of Instruction from the Third and Second Millenia B.C.*, transl. Alyward M. Blackman (London: Routledge, 2015), 3, 66.

34. Sahar Abdallah Mohamed, "Al Jawaree fi Al Asr Al Mamlwkee," *Al-Ostaz Journal* 208, no.1(2014), 388.

35. Ibid., 387.

36. Ibid., 387.

The first female singer in modern Egypt was **Sakna** (Figure 2). This famous singer was born in Alexandria in 1801, and Mohammed Ali[37] granted her a badge of honour in recognition of her singing[38]. **Sakna Bek** came to Cairo at young age and is considered the earliest singer of modern era after the female singers of the Mamluk era. She became well-known during the reign of Mohammed Ali. She sang and entertained at the pleasure nights in Al-Azbekeya parks that were dominated by street performers and military or police choirs and occasionally shadow theatre and folk singing performances[39].

Figure 2. *Sakna Bek*
Source: https://www.elmwatin.com/443998/

Sakna was said to be educated, tactful, sociable, intelligent, quick-witted, very calm in her speech, strong in singing, and religious. She had memorized the Quran and was capable of reciting it with a pure voice. Therefore, she was frequently invited to palaces to entertain the attendees. She was also invited to the princes' palaces to sing at the wedding parties of Ibrahim Pasha's sons. In the era of Abbas I and Said Pasha, she was so famous that she became the singer of kings. It was said that Said Pasha called her a "Hanim", which angered the ladies of the palace. Therefore, he gave her the title of "Pasha", and she became "Sakna Bek", much to their chagrin. It is also said that the Turks were impressed by her singing, so they called her Sakna Bek. In addition, she was clever and brilliant, so the Egyptians preferred her. She became the woman of her time, just as Umm Kulthum did. "Sakna Pasha", as she was called by the commoners, lived a few meters from the mosque of al-Sayyida Nafisa on al-Khalifa Street in Cairo[40].

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37. The founder of modern Egypt; he ruled Egypt from 1805 to 1848.
38. *The book of the first Arab Music Conference held in Cairo 1932*, 17.
39. Ibid.
40. Escad Youneis, *Zai ma Baolak Keda* (Cairo: Dar Nahdt Masr, 2002), 282.

The house of Sakna Pasha on al-Khalifa Street was given to her as a gift by Khedive Ismail in recognition of her unique talent; the house built in 1846 during the era of Mohamed Ali by a French architect.[41] (Figure 3).
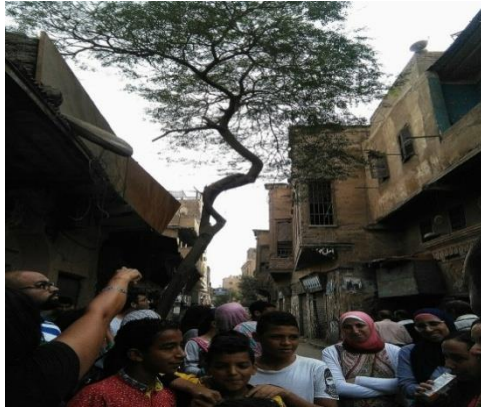

Figure 3. *The House of Sakna Pasha in Kjalifa Street in Cairo*
Source: https://bit.ly/338YORD.

At the height of her fame, a girl called "**Almaz**" came to Sakna, who welcomed her. Sakna involved Almaz in her concerts, but the latter became more prom inent and separated from Sakna, who retired from singing[42]. In fact, Almaz's real name was "Sokaina", but people called her Almaz, which means "diamonds", because of her voice's purity and clarity and her beauty. She did not descend from a wealthy family[43]. She lived in a private suite in the palace of Khedive Ismail and was allowed to leave it only to sing in his presence, so she had a prestigious position among the residents of the palace.

Although the female singers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries belonged to the middle classes, they became wealthy in the zenith of their glory, which indicates that the profession of singing provided them with abundant financial returns in addition to the moral return, i.e., respect from leaders and commoners. In Ismail's reign, a spirit of Renaissance with respect to music and singing prevailed among singers, who followed in the footsteps of their predecessors in terms of style. If this change began in the era of Ismail,

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41.   http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/32/246119/Folk/Along-the-trail-of-lions-revisiting-Cairos-histori.aspx. The house was built on an area covering 880 meters. "Sakna'a" house consists of two stories. The ground floor is divided into 3 suites for the harem and approximately 20 rooms, as well as servants' quarters facing the wooden gate. The halls of the upper storey have marble floors, and the roof is gilded. These halls were dedicated to rehearsals and to hosting Khedive Ismail at private concerts when he wanted to listen to Sakna. There is an Arab-style bathroom with holes in the ceiling decorated with stained glass that is designed architecturally to allow light to enter the bathroom all day.

42. *The book of the first Arab Music Conference held in Cairo 1932*, 17.

43. Fekree Botros, *Fananoo Alexandria* (Alexandria: Al Heaha Al Amah Li Maktabt Alaskandriah, 2001), 13-14. https://bit.ly/3bEWqWw

it deepened in the era of occupation, during which foreign control of all the country's capabilities increased and hindered the project of national Renaissance. The role of the occupation in changing the pattern of Egyptian leadership was clear, and the military abandoned its post. This paved the way for effendis and those wearing the *tarbush* (fez) to disseminate modern political ideas. One such figure was Lutfi al-Sayyid, who promoted the slogan "Egypt for the Egyptians"; Mustafa Kamel urged the youth to call for independence with great persistence. In addition, there was Mohammed Farid, who sought to transform the emotional slogans into a practical reality through the masses in the villages and cities. The art of singing after **Sakna** and **Almaz** relocated to Mohammed Ali Street. It was practiced by "Awalim" (of Almeh). The cafes of Cairo became venues for singing[44]. Then, singing bands spread in Emad El Din Street, including the bands of Ritaiba, Ansaf Roushdy, Suad Mahasen, Alia Fawzi, Naima al-Masriya, and Malak[45].

The labourers in this field lived and worked all over Egypt, but they were not encouraged to work in such a profession until the outbreak of the 1919 Revolution, which united all sects of the nation and to which many female singers contributed through song. This was followed by Egypt's Unilateral Declaration of Independence on February 28 and its debut as a parliamentary government with the issuing of the 1923 AD Constitution. This led to many economic, social and intellectual changes. In the economic field, Talaat Harb attempted to make Egypt an economic entity, and in the social field, Qassem Amin called for women's liberation, a call that influenced a group of Egyptian women, most notably Hoda Shaarawy[46].

Importantly, during the reign of King Fuad, the number of female singers increased significantly, with the greatest number of female singers working during this time. This was the direct result of Qasim Amin's call to liberate women, in response to which women went to work in different professions, including singing, which became normal in Egyptian society. The increasing number of female singers was a direct result of Qasim Amin's call and a reflection of King Fuad's interest in the arts.

With the emergence of a women's artistic movement led by the artist Munira al-Mahdiya (Sultana) and **Badia Masabni**, women were encouraged to join the fields of singing and theatre. This provided a huge boost for women in that era as female singers began to perform short songs. At that time, **Umm Kulthum** appeared (Figure 4).

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44. Kathleen W. Fraser, *Before they were Belly Dancers: European Accounts of Female Entertainers in Egypt 1766-1870* (North Carolina: McFarland Company, Inc., 2015), 34.

45. Abd El Monecm Ibrahim Al Gmecy, *Tatwar Al Moseqa wa Al Tarab fi Masr Al Haditha* (Giza: Matbwcat Berzm Al Thaqafia, 2005), 7.

46. Qasim Amin, *The Liberation of Women. The New Woman, Two Documents in the History of Egyptian Feminism*, transl. Samiha Sidhom Peterson (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1992), xiii.

Figure 4. *Umm Kulthum*
Source: http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/2082389.aspx

Accordingly, the period from 1926 to 1930 was characterized by a process of selecting the best female singers from the many who appeared in the third decade of the twentieth century. Fans were unanimous in their admiration of three singers, namely, Munira al-Mahdiya, Fethiya Ahmed, and Umm Kulthum[47].

It is worth noting that the professional singing of women in Egypt was not for ordinary people but was limited to the princes and elite, who held concerts in their palaces or frequented dance and ballet halls. This situation was similar to that in ancient Egypt.

It can be said that a long period of aimless or absurd singing stemmed from this era's interplay of political and social conditions. Such conditions were evaded by Sakna and Almaz, but most of the female singers of the early twentieth century who came after them indulged in them. It was during this time that **Munira Al-Mahdiya** entered the scene. She was the first Egyptian Muslim to stand on stage[48]. Munira al-Mahdiya sang at a professional level and left a great legacy in the field of art. Some female singers turned to singing in the theatres, and she was called "*Sultanat al-Tarab*" or "the queen of singing". She founded a nightclub in Azbakeya that was frequented by the rich, poets and writers. She also introduced young singers of both sexes on her stage.[49]

Here we introduce the most celebrated female singer in Egyptian history: Umm Kulthum. Umm Kulthum's story is that of a successful musician in a complex society, the story of a village girl who grew up to became the cultural symbol of a nation. Her real name was Fatima Ibrahim El-Beltagy. She was an Egyptian singer and actress, born in the province of Dakahlia under the rule of

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47. Ahmed Zaki Abd El Haleem, *Nesaa Fawq El Qemah*, (Cairo: Dar El Faisel, 1987), 118.

48. *Al Akhbar Newspaper*, 18th August 1915; Roazan Anwar Medhat, *Al Drama Al Nesaeh fi Al Masrah Al Arabee Al Hadeeth: masrah Maisoon Hana* (Cairo: Dar Al Ghida Llnashr wa Twazeec, 2013), 34.

49. Abd El Monecm Ibrahim Al Gmecy, *Tatwar Al Moseqa wa Al Tarab fi Masr Al Haditha*, 106.

Khedive on December 30, 1898, or officially on May 4, 1908, according to the civil records[50]. She was famous in Egypt and throughout the Arab world. Umm Kulthum was born to a modest family in a rural village called Tamay e-Zahayra.[51]. She began to sing at the age of twelve, when her father took her to concerts to sing with him. After the judge Ali Bek Abu Hussein heard her, he said to her father, "You have a treasure that you do not appreciate … it is in the voice of your daughter". He advised her father to take care of her[52].

Umm Kulthum became famous at young age as she began working merely to increase her family's income. However, she surpassed her father's expectations and became the main breadwinner of her family. Once, Mohamed Aboul Ela, a modestly famous singer, was travelling on the same train as her by chance and heard her singing[53]. Sometime after 1916 AD, her father met Sheikh Zakariya Ahmad and Aboul Ela Mohamed, who had come to Sinbillawin to celebrate the Ramadan nights, and with much urgency, they persuaded her father to move to Cairo with Umm Kulthum in 1922 AD[54].

Umm Kulthum sought to establish close political relationships with the then-prominent Egyptian figures, so she managed to sing at concerts attended by senior politicians and rulers. In February 1936, Umm Kulthum participated in a special ceremony for King Farouk's birth anniversary. In 1939, Queen Nazli asked Umm Kulthum to sing at the wedding party of Princess Fawzia and Prince Reza Pahlavi, Shah of Iran[55]. In 1944 AD, King Farouk decorated her with the highest level of orders (nishan el kamal), an honour reserved exclusively for members of the royal family and politicians. She was labelled "Sahebat al-'Esma" or "Lady of high social standing"[56]. After the July 23 Revolution, everything related to the reign of the former king was dealt with aggressively. Hence, Umm Kulthum was prevented from broadcasting her songs on the radio and was finally expelled from her position as the Musicians Syndicate head as a singer of the bygone era. This was not a decision of the Revolutionary Command Council but was an individual decision made by the officer overseeing the

50. Lamace Al Mtecee, *Mawswcat Nesaa wa Rejal mn Masr* (Cairo: Dar Al Shrook, 2003), 12.

51. Virginia Danielson, "*the Voice of Egypt". Umm Kulthum Arabic song, and Egyptian Society in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: the University of Chicago press, 1997), 21.

52. Lamace Al Mtecee, Mawswcat Nesaa wa Rejal mn Masr, 13.

53. Virginia Danielson, "*the Voice of Egypt". Umm Kulthum Arabic song, and Egyptian Society in the Twentieth Century*, 25.

54. Lamace Al Mtecee, *Mawswcat Nesaa wa Rejal mn Masr*, p.14.

55. Shreen Gaber, "Umm Kulthum bain Al Malek Farouk wa Abd Elnaseer," in *Zakrat Masr Almoasrah* 31-1-.2011

56. Abd El Monecm Ibrahim Al Gmecy, *Tatwar Al Moseqa wa Al Tarab fi Masr Al Haditha*, 95.

radio[57]. Although Umm Kulthum sang "Gholobt Asaleh fe Rohy" (I'm fed up with Reconciling to My Soul) for the besieged army in Fallujah during the Palestinian war, including for Nasser and Sadat, she was considered against the revolution because of her title, "Sahebat al-'Esma". This was in addition to her singing for the king more than once and her singing in 1932 in the presence of King Fuad[58]:

Afdihe In Hafeza al-Hawa Aw Dhaya'a   :   Malak al-Fuad Fama 'Assa An Asna'a

However, Egyptian president Nasser reversed the decision. When Nasser's actions crystallized in the direction of socialism in 1956 AD, Umm Kulthum commissioned several composers to search for songs that fit this ideology. In 1965, Nasser granted her "Qiladat al-Jumhouriya" (the Order of the Republic)[59]. After the 1967 setback, Umm Kulthum took up activism, motivated by patriotism[60]. She sang everywhere and collected money for the war.

Worth mentioning that the same act happened in ancient Egypt as previously mentioned. She sang in Bamanhour and collected 283,000 LE. In addition, she sang in Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan, Lebanon, Kuwait and Paris[61]. She died in Cairo on Monday February 3, 1975, at the age of 76 years. She was and still is the voice of Egypt.

The details provided above clearly indicate the important position attained by female solo singers in the course of Egyptian history; though most of them were from the lower classes, after achieving fame through their careers, they gained prestige. It appears that Egyptian rulers broadly encouraged female singers. In both ancient and modern Egypt, female singers were widely respected by both rulers and the general populace.

The Characteristic Features of Female Singers

There are certain model examples for the themes of female soloist in ancient Egypt. Their number is ten; one dates to the Old Kingdom period, another one dates to the First Intermediate Period, seven date to the Middle Kingdom period, and the last example dates to the New Kingdom period. The main information and details for these themes, concerning the tomb in which the theme is found

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57. Virginia Danielson, "performance, political, Identity, and Memory. Umm Kulthum and Gamal cAbd Al Nasir", 111.

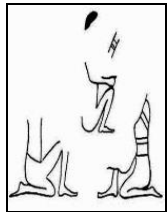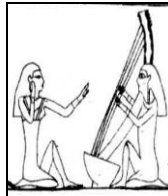58. Ibid., 112.

59. *http://nasser.bibalex.org/Days/DaysAll.aspx?CS=5&x=5&lang=ar*

60. Laura Lohman, *Umm Kulthum. Artistic agency and the Shaping of an Arab Legend 1967-2007* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2010), 6.

61. Abd El Monecm Ibrahim Al Gmecy, *Tatwar Al Moseqa wa Al Tarab fi Masr Al Haditha*, 93.

and its date, the site of the theme in the tomb, the main context of the theme, the individuals represented in the theme, the way of depicting the singer (attitude), and the song inscribed in the theme, are discussed in the following table (Table 1).

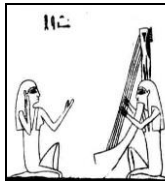| No.	The site of the theme	The Date of the theme	The Context of the theme	The individuals in the theme	The Attitude of the singer	The Inscription in the theme	he theme
1.	Tomb of *Nikaure* at Saqqara.[62] Left outer jamb of the false door.[63]	Old Kingdom, 5th Dynasty.	Entertainment for the wife of *Nikaure*.	Duo; the singer and a female harpist.	Seated, Kneeling on one leg.	Names of the singer "*Iti*" and the harpist "*Hknw*".	
2.	Tomb of *Ankhtifi* at Mo'alla in Upper Egypt.[64] Northern part of the eastern wall of large chamber.	First Intermediate Period, 9th Dynasty.	Festival and banquet scene for the owner of the tomb and his relatives.	Ensembles of three individuals; the singer and two male musicians.	Seated, Squatting attitude.	Nothing.	
3.	Tomb of Khety No. 17 at Beni Hassan.[65] Eastern half of the northern wall.	Middle Kingdom, 11th Dynasty.	The "Maa theme", where the theme is included in the outdoor crafts and activities that are observed by the large scale figure of the owner of the tomb.[66]	Duo; the singer and a female harpist.	Seated, Kneeling on one leg.	Nothing.	

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62. Jaromir Malek and Werner Forman, *In the Shadow of the Pyramids Egypt during the Old Kingdom* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 99.

63. The false door is now preserved in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo CG 1414 ; Abeer el-Shahawy and Farid Atiya, *The Egyptian Museum in Cairo A Walk through the Alleys of Ancient Egypt* (Cairo: Farid Atyia Press, 2005), 89, Figure 56.

64. Vandier Jacques, "*Mo'alla. La tombe d'Ankhtifi et la tombe de Sebekhotep*", IFAO, Bibliotheque d'etudes, Tome XVIII, (1950), Figure 49.

65. P. E. Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, Part II, (London, 1893), pl. XIV, 58, 60.

66. The representation of musicians in the context of the "Maa theme" was so popular in the Old Kingdom scenes. Its main purpose is the entertainment in the course of inspection for both the tomb owner and his wife or daughter. L'ubica Hudáková, *the*

4.	Tomb of Khety No. 17 at Beni Hassan.[67] Eastern half of the south wall	Middle Kingdom, 11th Dynasty.	The "Maa theme".	Duo; the singer and a female harpist.	Seated, Kneeling on one leg.	Nothing.	
5.	Tomb of Baqet III No. 15 at Beni Hassan.[68] On the north wall of the main chamber.	Middle Kingdom, 11th Dynasty.	The "Maa theme".	Duo; the singer and a female harpist.	Seated, Kneeling on one leg.	The title *Hsyt*.	
6.	Tomb of Antefoqer and his wife Senet TT 60.[69] On the south wall of the passageway.	Middle Kingdom, 12th Dynasty.	Entertainment with music and dance for the celebration of the festival of goddess Hathor.	Duo; the singer and a female flutist.	Seated, Kneeling on both legs.	A praise song: "Come, Sobek, to Antefoqer. Make everything that he likes".	
7.	Tomb of Sarenput I at Qubbet el-Hawa in Aswan.[70] On the northern half of the façade of the tomb.[71]	Middle Kingdom, 12th Dynasty.	Festival and banquet scene.	Ensembles of three individuals; two male musicians, and the female singer.	Seated, Squatting attitude.	Nothing.	

Representations of Women in the Middle Kingdom Tombs of Officials: Studies in Iconography (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 572.

67. Abd El Ghafar Shadeed, *Maqaber Bani Hassan fi Masr Al Wasta*, first edition (Cairo: Al Markez Al Qawme lltargma, 2016), 51.

68. Newberry, *Beni Hasan*, Part II, Pl. IV, p. 47.

69. Davies Norman de Garis, Gardiner Alan H, Davies Nina de Garis, *The tomb of Antefoker, vizier of Sésostris I and of his wife Senet*, The Theban Tombs series, second memoir, EES (London, 1920).

70. Müller Hans Wolfgang, "Die Felsengräber der Fürsten von Elephantine aus der Zeit des Mittleren Reiches," *ÄgForsch* 9 (Gluckstadt-Hambourg-New York, 1940), 29-31.

71. R. B. Parkinson and D. Franke, "A song for Sarenput: Texts from Qubbet el-Hawa Tomb 36", in Z. Hawass and J. Richards (eds.), the Archaeology and Art of Ancient Egypt II (Cairo, 2007), pp. 219-235; R. B. Parkinson, Reading Ancient Egyptian Poetry among other Histories, (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 14, Figure 104.

8.	Tomb of Sarenput I at Qubbet el-Hawa. The south eastern corner of the outer hall.[72]	Middle Kingdom, 12th Dynasty.	Festival and banquet scene.	Duo of two female singers.	Seated, Squatting attitude.	A praise song for the sake of Sarenput I and his relatives.	
9.	Tomb of Wahka II at Qau el-Kebir.[73] The upper register on the eastern wall of the inner wide chamber.	Middle Kingdom, 12th Dynasty.	A fragmentary scene with female dancers and tumblers.	Two individuals; the singer and an acrobatic female dancer.	Striding and dancing as well.	"...strong upon you, in your beautiful face, that you might see your god of your town, rejoicing in you ..."	
10.	Tomb of Kheruef TT 192 in the Theban necropolis.[74] The bottom sub-register on the south wall of the west portico of the tomb.	New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty.	Ceremonies for the first jubilee festival of king Amenhotep III.	Ensembles of four individuals; the singer and three female flutists.	Seated, Kneeling on both legs.	A praise song to goddess Hathor.	

Table 1. *The Themes of Female Solo Singer in Ancient Egypt*
Source: Designed By Authors

There were a number of characteristic features for the vocalists (both singers and chanters) in ancient Egypt (as was shown in the previous Table 1);[75]

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72. L'ubica Hudáková, The Representations of Women in the Middle Kingdom Tombs of Officials, https://bit.ly/33eirrk.

73. Wolfram Grajetzki, *"Qau el-Kebir"*, in UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology (Los Angeles. https://bit.ly/35lIe3A, 2012), 2; W. M. F. Petrie, *Antaeopolis: The Tombs of Qau* (London, 1930), pl. 24; Ellen Morris, "*Paddle Dolls and Performance*", in *JARCE* 47, (2011), 81, Figure 4.

74. Nims Ch F, Habachi L, Wente E.F, and Larkin D.B, *The Tomb of Kheruef, Theban Tomb 192*, the Epigraphic Survey in Cooperation with the Department of Antiquities of Egypt, (Chicago: Illinois, The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1980), 102, pl. 34.

75. Heidi Köpp-Junk, *"Textual, Iconographical, and Archaeological Evidence for the Performance of Ancient Egyptian Music"*, in the study of Musical Performance in Antiquity:

1. Representing with a straight back and the body is in a forward position to allow much deeper breathing and thus singing the long passages in the song comfortably.
2. Representing the face with a slightly opened mouth.
3. Placing one hand on the ear.
4. An accompanying inscription in the musician theme.
5. Clapping the hands as a usual custom to mark the time.

Singers in the music scenes depicted in private tombs from the Old and Middle Kingdom are usually represented holding their hands behind their ears as if listening. There are certain gestures in these scenes that indicate that a singer is listening: [76]

1. The head is turned with one ear directed toward the incoming sound, often supported by a corresponding eye movement.
2. The sound volume is enhanced by cupping one hand behind the ears.

The different postures of the hands and arms of the singers denote the presence of a system of musical notation based on chirognomy or gesticulations. This system was a way to indicate to the musicians the musical intervals.[77] (Figure 5).
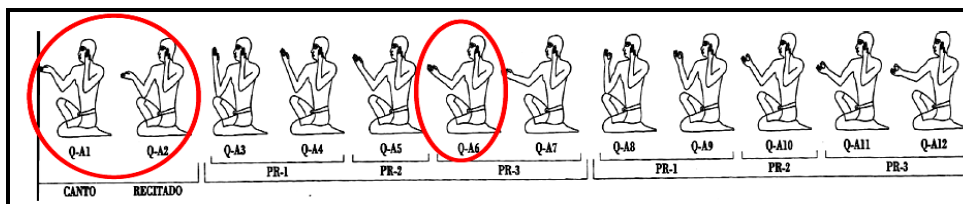
Figure 5. *The Different Postures for the Hands and Arms of the Singers*
Source: Carlos Bonete Vizcaíno, *Música, danza e instrumentos en el Antiguo Egipto*, (Madrid: Universidad CEU San Pablo, 2015), Figura 11

One of the most positive resemblances between the traditional Egyptian and the ancient Egyptian musical characteristic features performed by the female singers is the use of hand signals "chirognomy". The stylized attitudes of the hands; either placing a hand on the ear while partly extending the other arm with elbow bent and the hand held up parallel to the head; or using the same extended arm and hand attitude but resting the opposite hand on one knee instead of

Archaeology and Written Sources, Edited by Agnès Garcia-Ventura, Claudia Tavolieri, and Lorenzo Verderame (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018), 96.
　　76. Albert Mudry, Wolfgang Pirsig, "The ear in the visual arts of ancient Egypt", in *The Mediterranean Journal of Otology*, The Mediterranean Society of Otology and Audiology, (2005), 81, 83.
　　77. Emerit Sibylle, *Music and Musicians*, 6.

placing it on the ear were used in singing and teaching the chant in the 20th century. Such traditional gestures are still practiced by female singers.[78]

During the New Kingdom female singers, among the other musicians, when hired to attend a party or a banquet, they were usually three or four behind the dancers either stood in the center or at one side of the festival chamber, and some sat cross-legged on the ground.[79] The same act appeared for modern Egyptian female singers.

However, the *majalis* during the Islamic era were famous for their lute, flute, and tambourine players. This is represented also on a collection of pottery wares preserved in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo. It is worth mentioning that the female singers would sit in the men's assemblies and were dressed in modest and respectful clothing. Though it was the custom of that period to sit behind a curtain, this practice may have developed later. In the Ayyubid era, some female singers were music and lute players. For example, during the reign of al-Malik al-Kamel, "**Ajiba**"[80] often played the tambourine.

The evening entertainments attended by women began with a dinner accompanied by singers and takht, followed by the singing of songs. Some of these performances included female dancers. Songs and chants developed into popular songs and then into parts and *taqtūqa*[81].

One of the most important female singers of the Mamluk era was called "**Khadija al-Rehabiyya**". She sang for men and women and even sang in public for commoners. People talked about the charm of her voice and her charisma, which ensnared everybody of her time[82].

Another female singer was called "**Asil al-Qal'eya**"; she tended to sing short songs, which was an exclusive feature of her art. Asil al-Qal'eya was well- known and favoured among dignitaries and the public[83] because of the universal interest in listening to her short songs. Another female singer called "**Haifa al-Laziza**" would sing long songs[84]. Other female singers were "**al-Rayesa Badreya Bint Jurei'a**" and "**Dina Bint al-Iqna'e**"[85].

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78. John Gillespie, *"The Egyptian Copts and their Music*" (Article available from www. Tasbeha.org and www.Copticchurch.net, 1967), 11.

79. Jeffrey Pulver, *The Music of Ancient Egypt*, 39; Ana Ruiz, *The Spirit of Ancient Egypt*, 60.

80. Nabil Mohamed Abd El Azeez, *El Tarab wa Alatoh fi Asr El Aybeen*, (Cairo: Al Matbaca Al Fania Al hadetha, 1980), p.22 .

81**.** *Taqtūqa* is a genre of light Arabic vocal music sung in regional or colloquial Arabic.

82. Ibn Eyas, *Badac El Zhoor fi Waqac El Dohoor*, vol. II (Cairo: El Haeah Al Masria Al amah Ll Ketab, 1331), 207.

83. Ibn Eyas, *Badac El Zhoor fi Waqac El Dohoor*, vol.III, 311.

84. Mohamed Qandeel El Baqali, *El Tarab*, 84

85. Khaleel El Badawi, *Mawsact Shaherat El Nesaa* (Jordan: Dar Osama Llnasher, 1998), 113

The backup musicians in Islamic Egypt were women, and women also initially sang behind a curtain to uphold decency by adhering to the traditions of the time. The progress of the twentieth century was accompanied by women's singing on stage, especially after the 28 February Declaration, the independence of Egypt from the Ottoman Empire and Qasim Amin's call for women's liberation. All this strongly encouraged women to sing, especially with the rulers' patronization of female singers in this era and the establishment of several theatres. Moreover, when Egyptian Radio began broadcasting, the society's view of female singers shifted.

Hence, it appears that religious chanting with roots in ancient Egypt and the singing of the elite coexisted with the singing of *Awalim* that filled the cafes.

On May 31, 1934, after the launching of Egyptian Radio, Umm Kulthum was the first to sing there in 1943 AD. She founded the first syndicate of musicians and led them as president, a position she maintained for ten years.

According to the discussion above, the tradition of backup players accompanying the solo singer was inherited from ancient Egypt, and the famous Umm Kulthum is a reflection of Iti, the ancient Egyptian singer.

Titles Related to Female Singers

Among the titles that are associated with solo singers in ancient Egypt are and *mr.t*, *ḥsy.t*, and *šmꜥyt*.[86] Concerning the title *mr.t*, its earliest mention dates back to the 4th Dynasty in the Old Kingdom period. The temple reliefs usually show the holder of the title standing with raised hands to greet the king as he approaches the temple. These reliefs were accompanied by an inscription of a song referring to the arrival of king. The main duties of the *mr.t* title holder were playing music in the presence of gods, and participating in some of the Jubilee festivities.[87]
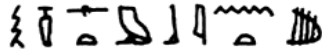
The other popular titles; *ḥsy.t, and šmꜥyt* were previously mentioned in the categories of female solo singers. The theme in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Baqet III No. 15 at Beni Hassan (Figure 5 in Table 1) indicates that the title *ḥsy.t* was inscribed above the solo singer. The title here is translated as "singer".[88] It describes the style of melodic music that is frequently accompanied by wind or stringed instruments, such as flute and the harp that is proved by the presence of the female harpist accompanied the solo singer in the theme.

Most of the themes for the solo singer in the Old and Middle Kingdoms (Table 1) show the singer with the female harpist. Such musician duo was

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86. Jean Li, *Elite Theban Women of the Eighth-Sixth Centuries BCE in Egypt*, 31.

87. A. M. Blackman, "On the Position of Women in the Ancient Egyptian Hierarchy", *JEA* 7, (1921): 8–30.

88. Wb. III, 165.

generally titled *"Hsy.t m bn. t* 𓇋𓊨𓏏𓆓𓏏𓀁 𓂖 the singer-harpist".[89] The holders of this title were considered to be professionals that received musical education like the first professional solo singer **Iti**.[90]

The title *ḥsyt* could be used in the secular contexts, not only the religious ones, like the title *šmꜥyt* adopted by the religious solo singer, to describe an activity rather than a title. This activity is mostly secular in nature like entertainment at banquets,[91] and this was also approved in the theme of Baqet III, where the theme of the solo singer was included in the daily outdoor crafts and activities.

During the Fatimid era, the sources do not mention any female singers by name except **Al Tabbalah** (the drummer) from the era of al-Mustansir, who gave her land beside al-Khalij al-Gharbi (the West Bay). This was called Ard al-Tabbalah (the Drummer's Land) after that female singer. It seems to have been called so because she would sing with drums[92]. Also for Sakana the first singer in modern Egypt as mentioned previously she had the title of Bek, throughout Egyptian history she was the only woman gained such title.

Umm Kulthum is also known by several titles, most notably Umm Kulthum. These titles include Thouma, al-Jame'a al-Arabiya, al-Sett, Sayedat al-Ghina' al-Arabe, Shams al-Asil, Sahebat al-'Essma, Kawkab al-Sharq, Qaitharat al-Sharq, Fananat al-Sha'b, The Lady of Arabic Singing, and Shams El Asil.

This is indication of similarity between both ancient and modern Egypt as giving titles for the female singer is an ancient Egyptian tradition.

Songs Sung by Females

In the ancient past, especially the period before the Middle Ages, songs were preserved by memory and tradition (the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation, or the fact of being passed on in this way). Musical notation did not exist before the Ptolemaic Period. It started to be developed approximately between the 5th and 4th century B.C.[93] However a written script of the songs (hymns) was used in the various ancient Egyptian rituals, for example the recorded texts of the Beautiful Festival of the Valley and the Opet Festival

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89. William A. Ward, Essays on Feminine Titles of the Middle Kingdom and Related Subjects, the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, 1986, p. 12.

90. Silvana E. Fantechi, *Singers and Musicians in New Kingdom Egypt*, 28, 29, 35.

91. Suzanne Lynn Onstine, *the Role of the Chantress (Šmcyt) in Ancient Egypt*, 15.

92. Nareman Abd El Kreem Ahmed, *Al Marah fi Al Asr Al Fatmi* (Cairo: Al Heah Al Masryia Al Amah Ll Ketab, 1991), 113, 115.

93. Eleonora Rocconi, *Music and Dance in Greece and Rome*, 82.

suggests that the words of the song may have been transcribed in order to be passed on from one generation to the next.[94]

A female singer called Baket appeared among a group of three musicians on the eastern wall of the second room of the 18th Dynasty tomb of Amenemhat TT 82 playing a harp and singing a song addressed to god Amun and his bark in the context of celebrating the Opet festival during the reign of king Thutmose III (Figure 6); *"wbn.k wbn nȝ n ḥȝ.wt n Imn-Rᶜ "Even as thou shinest forth, so shine forth the faces of Amun-Ra"*.[95]

Figure 6. *The Female Singer Baket in the 18th Dynasty Tomb of Amenemhat TT 82*
Source: https://bit.ly/3hewulA

Another female singer is represented in a similar scene of musicians in the same tomb of Amenemhat, called Ahmose, appeared singing and playing harp at the same time like Baket. Her song started with a reference to visiting the temple of god Amun-Ra in the Festival of the New Year and finished with mentioning the Calendrical Festivals.[96]

An example for the songs recalling the love poetry of the Ramesside Period that were sung by women and girls in ancient Egypt is found in the papyrus of Harris. A girl sang a song for her beloved during her trip to the

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94. Suzanne Lynn Onstine, *the Role of the Chantress (Šmꜥyt) in Ancient Egypt*, 60.

95. Nina de Garis Davies, Alan H. Gardiner,"The tomb of Amenemhet (No. 82)", dans Norman de Garis Davies et Alan H. Gardiner (éditeurs), The Theban Tomb series, Tome 1, (London, 1915), 63, Pl. XV.

96. John C. Darnell, "The Rituals of Love in Ancient Egypt: Festival Songs of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the Ramesside Love Poetry", in *Die Welt Des Orients*, vol. 46, no. 1, (2016), 40-43.

Heliopolitan country side to attend the festival of the opening of a new canal to allow flood water to flow. The song comprised the following words;[97]

> *iw.i r fȝ i(t).i r sḫs bn gr.i*
> *sḫȝ ȝty.i pȝ Rᶜ*
> *kȝ ptr.i pȝ ᶜq n sn.i*
> *iw.f r pr……*
> "*I shall raise myself to run without stop, and my heart shall remember the god (Ra), then I will see my brother's entrance, while he is heading to the park…*"

The song is ended with the following sentence;

> *iw.i m špst nbt tȝwy iw.i ḥnᶜ.k*
> "*I am the noble one, the lady of the two lands when I am with you.*"

For modern Egypt, political events did not affect the singing of women but did influence what they sang, which varied from religious songs in the seventeenth century and love songs in the eighteenth century to the tasteless and vulgar songs of the beginning of the nineteenth century and the national songs of the second half of the nineteenth century.

At the intellectual and cultural levels, there were several prominent poets, including Ahmed Shawki, Hafez Ibrahim and Khalil Mutran, who spoke in their poems about the pharaohs' glory and emphasized the idea of national revival. All these developments were reflected in the artistic arena and the complex elements of the creative processes that were associated with Egyptian society in general and singing and theatre in particular. On the basis of the slogan "Egypt for the Egyptians", Egyptian music came to the fore. Female musicians were also clearly present in the era of King Farouk. There is no doubt that the emergence of radio led to the rapid spread of songs and encouraged female singers to find their way[98].

Conclusion

Therefore, it can be said that women's role in the field of singing has been manifested throughout Egyptian history. Their position as singers blossomed at times and faded at others. One of the most important categories of female singers in ancient Egypt was the religious singer, whose main role was chanting hymns and prays during the festivals and daily rituals in honour of the god of the

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97. F. Haikal, "*Thoughts and Reflexions on the Love Songs in Ancient Egypt*", in *Vicino Oriente Quaderno1*, (1997), 83-84.

98. Mohamed Qabeel, *Mwsocat Alghnaa Almasry fin Al Qrn Al Eshreen* (Cairo: Al Heah Al Amah Ll Ketab, 1999), 12.

temple. She was of considerable authority and had honorable titles. Her title "Chantress" is very similar in its religious symbolism to the modern one "Sheikha" that was adopted by modern solo singers like Umm Kulthum. Another category for female singers but secular in its nature, which was so popular in ancient Egypt, was the itinerant singer that was hired in the ancient Egyptian wealthy banquets and parties to amuse and entertain the guests. The same for modern Egypt women singers were divided into classes, with those who sang for rulers and the aristocratic class on the one hand and the *Awalim* or ill-reputed *Ghawazi* on the other. Throughout history, kings and sultans showed favour to the women singers. The female singer in ancient Egypt participated in all the important royal ceremonies like the Heb-Sed festival and presented her musical performances abroad, this act continued till modern era.

There were tutors for female singers in both ancient and modern Egypt. The custom of singing has remained similar to that in ancient Egypt, with its backup band. The first female singer of the modern era was Sakna, who appeared in the 19th century. The honours she enjoyed indicate the notable shift in rulers' attention to female singers, as they began to bestow gifts and titles upon them. For example, the title "Bek" had not been given to a woman in the history of Egypt until Sakna, and her house in Cairo still witnesses the luxury she lived in. Despite the multiplicity of female singers in the twentieth century, Umm Kulthum has remained the most famous, for she enjoyed the respect and appreciation of many people worldwide. She was able to change the role of female singer from someone who was patronized by the state to a supporter of the state by donating the returns from her concerts to the army after the July Revolution.

The ancient Egyptian themes for solo female singers show her as a member of either a musical duos or ensembles of three or four musicians. The duos included just females the singer and the musician, while the musical ensembles could include male musicians together with the female singer. The ancient Egyptian theme of the 9th Dynasty tomb of Ankhtifi shows the female singer sitting in a higher level than the members of the musical ensembles, who are males. This is similar to our modern times where the singer usually precedes her musical ensembles. In the ancient Egyptian themes of musical duos, the female singer is sat either to the right or the left of the theme, while in the ensembles she appears standing in the center of the theme in front of the musicians.

There are certain features concerning the way of depicting the solo female singer in the ancient Egyptian themes of musical duos;

1. Usually sitting with a straight back and the body in a forward position except for the head, arms, and legs. A unique example for a solo female singer in a standing attitude is found in the 12th Dynasty tomb of Wahka II at Qau el-Kebir.

2. Kneeling either on both legs or on one leg, or being represented in a squatting attitude.
3. Wearing either a short cut wig that was popular during the Old Kingdom or a long wig that appears either a single mass hanging on the back or with a part hanging on one shoulder. In all cases the ears are exposed.
4. Either the right or the left hand, according to the orientation of the singer in the theme, with extended fingers placed either on the cheek close to the ear or on the lower tip of the ear. The other hand with extended fingers towards the female musician.
5. Wearing the traditional tight sheath dress (a wraparound robe and the shoulder straps are independent elements of the robe that could be worn or not) without straps or provided with either two or one strap exposing the chest.
6. The jewelries are usually a broad collar and bracelets.

All the themes of the musical duos in ancient Egypt show the solo female singer accompanied by a female harpist except for two examples, in the 12th Dynasty tomb of Antefoqer TT 60 and the 18th Dynasty tomb of Kheruef TT 192, where the musician is a female flutist. It is observed in these two examples that the flute was used as a main musical instrument in the female musical duos theme that was related to the context of festival scenes in honor of a god or a king and the type of the song performed by the singer is a praise one, while the other examples used the harp were all included in the private secular contexts of entertainment where no songs were inscribed in the theme just the name or the title of the singer and the accompanied musician. These features are similar to those of modern Egypt; placing one hand at ear, accompanied by lute player, and wearing jewelries which are usually a broad collar and bracelets. This is an evidence that that the distinctive characteristics of female solo singing in ancient Egypt have been inherited in the style of oriental singing in particular.
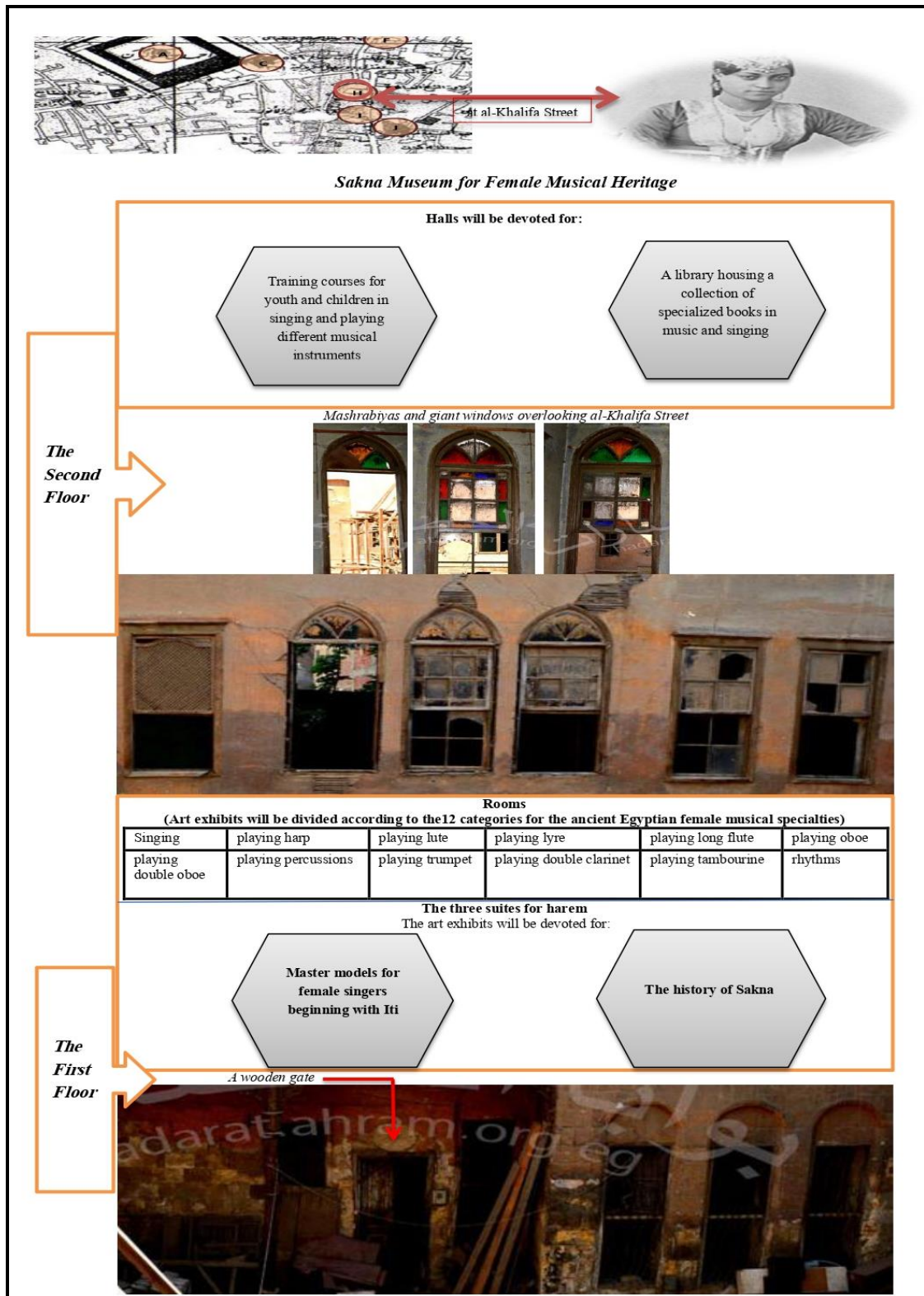
Figure 7. *A Schematic conceptualization of Sakna museum and its contents*
Source: Designed by the Author

Recommendations

The study recommends turning the house of Sakna Bek into a museum showcasing the history of women's singing in Egypt from ancient Egypt until modern times (Figure 7 a Schematic conceptualization of Sakna museum and its contents). It is a valuable place that was presented by a ruler to the first female singer in the history of modern Egypt and the only female singer given the title "Bek". Such a museum should focus on the history of women in singing, pictures of female singers, and the most important instruments that accompanied their singing. In addition, this place should be promoted because of its great cultural value in reflecting the civilized ideas of the Egyptians, who respected the artistic productions of women and their abilities and immortalized them in history. Weekly concerts should be organized featuring female singers representing an era of history. Finally, there should be touristic promotions of these events to present them as significant and prestigious social activities.

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Thucydides and the Synchronous Pandemic

By Gregory T. Papanikos[*]

Thucydides survived the pestilence and gave a vivid portrayal of the Athenian Epidemic at the onset of the Peloponnesian War. He belongs to the rare group of historians who wrote history about events which had a personal experience. He was involved with the war (as an Athenian strategos) and with the epidemic (had survived an infection). His History of the Peloponnesian War is a textbook approach of how historical events and facts should be researched and described. His historical methodology is based on an orthological analysis of human behaviour. Such an approach enables the researcher to interpret existing stylized facts and personal involvements with reason and objectivity. Within this framework, this paper examines Thucydides exposition of the epidemic of 430 BCE by means of four hypotheses which underline his historical analysis of the pestilence. Then, I proceed with the verification of these hypotheses using the data generation process of the synchronous pandemic of 2020. My main conclusion is that despite technological progress made by human beings with the graceful assistance of Prometheus, human nature did not change as much as Thucydides so eloquently emphasized, prognosed and hoped. Evidence on synchronous pandemic supports Thucydides diagnosis of the human nature but does not vindicate him on the hypothesis (or may be his wish) that his history would be used by future generations to avoid making the same mistakes over and over again. So far, the same or similar faults seem unavoidable. It appears that these faults are embedded in human nature and cannot be avoided.

Prolegomena

This paper aims to discuss the epidemic which ravaged Athens in the summer of 430 BCE; one year after the start of the Peloponnesian War which lasted 27 years (431-404). Thucydides immortalized the epidemic. He mentioned that the contagious disease was fearsome; many died but an exact number was not given. Littman (2009) stated that 25% of the Athenian population died (between 75 and 100 thousand people) but no source is cited[1]. Thucydides did make a reference to numbers when he described an unsuccessful military expedition of 4,000 Athenian soldiers to Potidaea. According to this (2.58), 1,500 or 37.5% of the soldiers died because of the disease. Earlier (1.23.3), he mentioned that the infectious disease (ἡ λοιμώδης νόσος) harmed (βλάψασα) the population but no numbers were given either. In his book of Pericles (*Parallel Bios[2]*), Plutarch said that at the beginning of the outbreak, Pericles led a military expedition to the Peloponnese. Many of his soldiers died from the

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1. J. F. D. Shrewsbury "The Plague of Athens," in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 24, no. 1(1950): 1-25, used the same number and cited an earlier source of Hutton Webster, *A History of the Ancient World* (London: George G. Harrap & Company, 1915). Webster (1915, 235-236) stated that "The pestilence spread like fire and slew at least one fourth of the inhabitants of Athens". No source is cited here either.

2. Plutarch (46 AD–119 AD) wrote comparative biographies of selected Greek and Roman. In the case of Pericles, his life is compared to that of Fabius Maximus.

disease but no statistics were given either. Thus, no one can quantify, with a certain degree of accuracy, the impact of the epidemic in terms of human losses. Later on (3.87), Thucydides himself made the same note, usually ignored by those who report numbers. Thucydides was very careful not to express qualitative assessments of historical facts as well, including social and political effects.

The epidemic lasted four years but its lethal effects occurred in two waves. The first in 430-429 BCE and the second in 427 BCE. According to Thucydides (3.87.1), however, the disease never disappeared (ἐκλιποῦσα μὲν οὐδένα χρόνον τὸ παντάπασιν). There was a sort of a pause (ἐγένετο δέ τις ὅμως διοκωχή) between the first and second wave. In the second spike, Thucydides (3.87.3) made a reference to numbers. He stated that the second wave was worse than the first because it killed no less (οὐκ ἐλάσσους) than 4,400 from the hoplites and 300 from the calvary (τετρακοσίων γὰρ ὁπλιτῶν καὶ τετρακισχιλίων οὐκ ἐλάσσους ἀπέθανον ἐκ τῶν τάξεων καὶ τριακοσίων ἱππέων). However, he was not able to provide a number for the rest of the masses (τοῦ δὲ ἄλλου ὄχλου) because it was undiscovered (ἀνεξεύρετος ἀριθμός). Besides this problem of numbers, Thucydides did provide a detailed chronicle of the other aspects of the disease which are examined in this paper.

The emphasis here is on the social and political effects of the epidemic rather than on its microbial origins and its epidemiological severity. These etiologies of the ancient Athenian epidemic are not examined but some references are made as long as they relate to individual, social and political issues and reactions at the level of society and polity. These issues include housing, population density, water supply, transportation restrictions, food supply and the quality of health services.

As mentioned, Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War is the only contemporary source[3]. He used an analytical historical method -presented below- but many other methods of analyses of the ancient Athenian epidemic have also been used to discern the causes of the outbreak. Recently, archaeological evidence has been employed taking advantage of the more recent sophisticated analyses of ancient DNA in preserved tissues[4]. Another source is the theatrical

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3. In his book *Parallel Bios of Pericles*, Plutarch made a number of references to the ancient Athenian epidemic. He cited other works which unfortunately have not survived, such as Theophrastus *Ethics* (Ηθικά). Nevertheless, even Plutarch himself based his *Pericles Bios* mainly on Thucydides. Most probably so also did others, since no one was a contemporary of Pericles. In these works, I do not include the work of various plays such as Aristophanes excellent trilogy on peace because they do not provide the information to evaluate the social and political aspects of the epidemic. For example, in the trilogy Aristophanes supports a peace agreement with Sparta but the majority of Athenians did not vote in favor in the Athenian *Ecclesia of Demos*.

4. See among many other studies Jennifer Manley, "Measles and Ancient Plagues: A Note on New Scientific Evidence," *Classical World*, 107, no. 2 (2013): 393-397; J. Longrigg, 'The Great Plague of Athens,' *History of Science* 18, no. 3 (1980): 209-25; Robert J. Littman, "The

plays which described the plague and human reactions to it. These have been supplemented by philological criticisms[5]. There are many methodological problems with all these approaches, discussed in the relevant scientific literature[6].

Apart from other problems, the historical analytical method suffers from "… translating any ancient foreign language are compounded by the fact that so many words in these languages have a variety of meanings. Additionally, due to the precision required in medical documentation, any word or phrase that is interpreted in a way other than that intended by the original author can skew a description toward or away from the actual diagnosis"[7]. In this paper, I use the original ancient text as the only source of information. The ancient relevant passages from Thucydides are cited but, in most cases, not literally (philologically) translated. Instead, the meaning or more accurately my own interpretation and understanding of it is outlined in the text.

My reading of Thucydides suggests that he was more interested in the social and political consequences of the epidemic rather than making a diagnosis of its pathology (origin) and nature; and this shaped the reporting of his narrative. My received view of the entire history of Thucydides (including the passages on the epidemic) is consistent with his historical methodological analysis. This historical method is examined in the next section of the paper. Subsequently four hypotheses are presented; all of which relate to the social

Plague of Athens: Epidemiology and Paleopathology," *Mt Sinai journal of Medicine* 76, no. 5 (2009): 456-67 B. Cunha, "The Cause of the Plague of Athens: Plague, Typhoid, Typhus, Small pox, or Measles?" *Infectious Disease Clinics of North America,* 18, no. 1 (2004): 29-43. Manolis J. Papagrigorakis et al., "DNA examination of ancient dental pulp incriminates typhoid fever as a probable cause of the Plague of Athens," *International Journal of Infectious Diseases,* 10 (2006): 206—214; Beth Shapiro & Andrew Rambaut, "No proof that typhoid caused the Plague of Athens (a reply to Papagrigorakis et al.)," *International Journal of Infectious Diseases* 10 (2006): 334—340; J. C. F. Poole and J. Holladay, "Thucydides and the Plague of Athens," *Classical Quarterly,* 29 (1979): 282-300; Alexander D. Langmuir, et al., "The Thucydides Syndrome," *New England Journal of Medicine, 313* (1985): 1027-30; Patrick Olson, "The Thucydides Syndrome: Ebola Déjà vu? (or Ebola Reemergent?)," *Emerging Infectious Disease, 2* (Apr-Jun 1996) 1-23; Allison Brugg, "Ancient Ebola Virus?" *Archaeology* (Nov/Dec 1996): 28; Bernard Dixon, "Ebola in Greece?" *British Medical Journal,* 313 (17 Aug 1996): 430; Constance Holden, "Ebola: Ancient History of 'New' Disease?" *Science,* 272 (14 June 1996): 1591. Classicists along with medical scientists still debate today the exact cause of the plague. No consensus has been reached. Thucydides description of the disease which he contracted and survived himself is not sufficient to identify the medical cause and the nature of the infection. On the other hand, DNA tests have not helped either. The methodological problems are too severe to reach any definite conclusion.

5. See the discussion by Robin Mitchell-Boyask, "The art of medicine: Plague and theatre in ancient Athens," *The Lancet,* 373(2009): 374-375.

6. A concise summary of this literature is given by Cheston B. Cunha and Burke A. Cunha, "Great Plagues of the Past and Remaining Questions," in Paleomicrobiology: Past Human Infections, ed. D. Raoult and M. Drancourt (Berlin: Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, 2008): 1-20.

7. See Cunha and Cunha (2008, p. 4)

and political consequences of the disease. Each hypothesis is, then, examined in a separate section. For each hypothesis, I dare to compare and verify it for its diachronical validity against the background of the synchronous pandemic. The last section of this paper concludes.

Thucydides' Historical Method and the Athenian Epidemic

Thucydides wanted to be useful, not congenial. He wanted to teach, not to please. His scope was to benefit not only his own generation but all future generations. He thought that it is in the nature of people to make the same mistakes over and over again. He also wanted to teach the eternal human race how to avoid repeating the same or similar mistakes[8]. This objective applied to his description of the epidemic of 430 BCE. He used this event to generalize in an inductive way about all future epidemics. Thus, those who would want to learn what really happened could benefit from reading his history: to learn not for the sake of learning but to be prepared for the future if the same situation arises. This is the crux of Thucydides historical analysis. He wrote a useful history. In his own masterful words (1.22.4), "…ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἕξει. κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν ξύγκειται".

I like the word "ἀγώνισμα". My interpretation is that Thucydides is ironic here because some of his colleagues wrote history to please an audience. He most probably meant Herodotus. As always then and now, the masses love to hear what they wanted to hear, e.g., they are the best and whatever they are doing is just and fair; the others (barbarians) are to be blamed.

He applied this approach in explaining the epidemic of 430 BCE. Thucydides, main description of the epidemic started right after Pericles' *Funeral Oration,* delivered to honor those who died during the first year of the Peloponnesian War. The relevant sections are from 2.47.1 to 2.65.13 of his book. However, as I have already stated, the epidemic was also mentioned in previous and later chapters. Reading these passages, I believe that Thucydides'

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8. The apparent contradiction between human nature and human learning on how to avoid mistakes was not mentioned by Thucydides. If mistakes were the result of ignorance, then learning is useful. However, if they are the result of "human nature", they cannot be avoided because as Thucydides himself claimed people do not differ much. This is true across all generations; current and future. It seems to me that Thucydides was not vindicated on this issue as I will demonstrate with the metaphysical (superstitional), social and political effects of the synchronous pandemic. The effects of the 2020 pandemic are very similar (παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι) to those of the ancient Athenian epidemic. Nothing was learned, at least so far. After all, hope is what left in Pandora's Jar for the humanity to cherish.

scope was to teach us, i.e., what to expect when the same (τοιούτων) or similar (παραπλησίων) things happen (ἔσεσθαι).

The synchronous pandemic of 2020 can be considered a similar one if not the same event at least in terms of its individual, social and political effects all of which are examined in this paper. What can we then learn from Thucydides' historical analytical account of the ancient Athenian epidemic and how does this compare with the synchronous pandemic? How did ancient Athenians react to the spread of the disease? These questions were not only sophisticatedly addressed by Thucydides but became, as he wished, a possession (κτῆμα) for all future generations to take advantage of it.

My approach (or better my own tactical method) of reading Thucydides is as follows. I view Thucydides' historical account as a series of testable hypotheses which can be verified (supported or rejected) against the background of similar events (facts) destined to ensue again. I apply this approach to the synchronous pandemic by developing four testable hypotheses. Thucydides thought they had a diachronical validity. The reason (νομίζειν) is that a human being (ἄνθρωπον) does not differ much (πολύ τε διαφέρειν οὐ δεῖ) from another human being (ἀνθρώπου) (1.84.4).

Thus, we may conclude that people will react the same way in the synchronous pandemic as did Athenians in 430 BCE. Is this the case? This paper aims to answer this question using the aforementioned hypotheses. These hypotheses are analyzed in the following sections of this paper. In the next section, though, I give a brief chronology of the epidemic based on Thucydides' "journalistic" account of it.

The Chronicle of the Epidemic of 430 BCE

After the victorious Persian Wars, in the first two decades of the 5th Century BCE, Athens and Sparta were locked into what Graham Allison termed the "Thucydides Trap"[9]. The relevant passage is found in 1.23.6 "… τὴν μὲν γὰρ ἀληθεστάτην πρόφασιν, ἀφανεστάτην δὲ λόγῳ, τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἡγοῦμαι μεγάλους γιγνομένους καὶ φόβον παρέχοντας τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις ἀναγκάσαι ἐς τὸ πολεμεῖν· αἱ δ' ἐς τὸ φανερὸν λεγόμεναι αἰτίαι αἵ δ' ἦσαν ἑκατέρων, ἀφ' ὧν λύσαντες τὰς σπονδὰς ἐς τὸν πόλεμον κατέστησαν".

However, what Thucydides termed openly alleged causes ("φανερὸν λεγόμεναι αἰτίαι") of the war which discussed in section 1.24.1 and thereafter are very pragmatic reasons to enter into a war. So, what Thucydides stated that was the "Thucydidian Trap" was not what Allison claimed to be. Thucydides said that the war started because of the fear of Sparta that Athens

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9. See Graham Allison, "The Thucydides Trap: Are the U.S. and China Headed for War?" *The Atlantic*, 24 September 2015, https://bit.ly/2yIU5KW.

would become great and overpower them. Spartans, therefore, had no other choice but to enter into war. However, a careful reading of Thucydides history would reveal that it was not the fear *per se* but a very solid and real economic reasoning of antithetical (economic) interests which brought the two cities and their allies into fierce antagonism and eventually into a war. As a matter of fact, after the Persian defeat, the entire 5th Century BCE is characterized as a period of war between Athens and Sparta or their allies with short periods of truce. The idea that wars are always the result of economic conflicts was a common belief in the times Thucydides wrote his history. For example, in his book Phaedo (c. 380 BCE, 66c), Plato writes that "Διὰ τὴν τῶν χρημάτων κτῆσιν πάντες οἱ πόλεμοι γίγνονται". All the wars are made to acquire money.

The war then was inevitable. Despite a 30 years peace agreement, signed in 445 BCE, the famous war broke out in 431 BCE and lasted, with some intermissions, 27 years. Athens was defeated but not because of the epidemic. Some claim that if the disease had not killed Pericles, he would have led them to a victorious result. If! However, as Pericles himself claimed -cited by Plutarch-, his military achievements were the result of good fortunate. If this were true (and I believe was true), then Pericles was not indispensable. After all Pericles could have been killed in one of the many battles he gave against the enemies of Athens. By 404, if not earlier, the epidemic had been long since forgotten.

As a matter of fact, when Nicias was addressing the *Ecclesia of Demos* in 415 BCE, arguing against the opportunistic and perilous expedition to Sicily, he reminded (6.12.1) the Athenians that they had just recovered from the great disease and the war (Καὶ μεμνῆσθαι χρὴ ἡμᾶς ὅτι νεωστὶ ἀπὸ νόσου μεγάλης καὶ πολέμου βραχύ τι λελωφήκαμεν) which increased both state revenues and the population of Athens (ὥστε καὶ χρήμασι καὶ τοῖς σώμασιν ηὐξῆσθαι).

But Nicias could not persuade the Athenian Demos; they decided to send the army and navy to Cecily and actually under the military leadership of Nicias himself who was left alone after Alcibiades deserted to Sparta. Thucydides said (6.26.2) that Athenians were preparing their expedition because now they had accumulated public funds due to the truce and had soldiers at their disposal because many of the youth of Athens came of age to serve as soldiers (ἄρτι δ' ἀνειλήφει ἡ πόλις ἑαυτὴν ἀπὸ τῆς νόσου καὶ τοῦ ξυνεχοῦς πολέμου ἔς τε ἡλικίας πλῆθος ἐπιγεγενημένης καὶ ἐς χρημάτων ἄθροισιν διὰ τὴν ἐκεχειρίαν, ὥστε ῥᾷον πάντα ἐπορίζετο. καὶ οἱ μὲν ἐν παρασκευῇ ἦσαν).

Thus, after 12 years Athenians had fully recovered and were able to undertake a dangerous military expedition that Pericles had so many times warned them against. Therefore, the loss of the war ten years later cannot be blamed on the epidemic. I am not sure if one could even blame it on the

disastrous expedition to Sicily but the causes of the defeat are not my subject here.

One year after the war had started, in the beginning of the summer of 430 BCE, Sparta and their allies invaded again the land of Attica and camped outside its Long Walls. As in the previous year, they started their catastrophic praxes on the rural arable land of the surrounding areas of Athens known as Attika. After not many days, the disease (νόσος) was born (γενέσθαι) among the Athenians (τοῖς ᾿Αθηναίοις).

At this point, Thucydides gave some information. My reading has been as follows. It was said (λεγόμενον) -not by him- that such a pestilence (λοιμός) was not something new and appeared before (πρότερον) in other places. He mentioned explicitly the island of Lemnos. But now there was a difference. All those who remembered or knew about previous outbreaks said that this was by far the most contagious and lethal epidemic. But this is a very common popular perception. What people encounter is always worse what they had experienced in the past.

On this issue, Thucydides was not helpful. He did not tell the future generations why Lemnos was explicitly mentioned. Perhaps here Thucydides acted as a "journalist" and reported what some Athenians said and discussed. Most probably some Athenians had a first-hand experience of a similar epidemic in Lemnos and this information was disseminated at the time. Thucydides used the word "ἐμνημονεύετο" which means that some Athenians carried this information in their "memory". I interpret it that they had experienced the disease.

True or not, Thucydides did not take any stance on this issue. At this point, it is clear that he did not blame Lemnos or any other places. It seems that the plague of Athens was not related to the plague in those other places. The only conclusion that one draws from this is that some Athenians knew that such epidemics could occur because it happened in the past. So, they had learned their lesson and presumably they knew how infectious it could be and most importantly that it could be over in a few years.

Then, Thucydides continued with another "journalistic" report on what people thought of the origin of this epidemic. This is discussed in a following section of this paper. At the end of section 2.48, Thucydides stated that he was going to give an account of the symptoms of the plague so that if this happened again, the future generations will know. He based his description on his own experience with the disease because had not just suffered through a case of the illness, but had also been a part of the community of victims, family, urban neighborhood, that had survived and been marked by the experience: "…ταῦτα δηλώσω αὐτός τε νοσήσας καὶ αὐτὸς ἰδὼν ἄλλους πάσχοντας".

I am not going to state the symptoms described by Thucydides. I have already mentioned many works which presented and discussed these symptoms.

No consensus has been reached. The nature and the medical cause of the disease are still debatable. There is only one-way to find out: if the same epidemic appears again, people will know. This is exactly what Thucydides told us. In his own words, "…ἐγὼ δὲ οἷόν τε ἐγίγνετο λέξω, καὶ ἀφ' ὧν ἄν τις σκοπῶν, εἴ ποτε καὶ αὖθις ἐπιπέσοι, μάλιστ' ἂν ἔχοι τι προειδὼς μὴ ἀγνοεῖν".

The meaning of this elegant excerpt is that Thucydides had only one scope (σκοπῶν). In case that this epidemic struck in the future (εἴ ποτε καὶ αὖθις ἐπιπέσοι), people will know and they will not ignore it (μὴ ἀγνοεῖν). This justification is consistent with the Thucydidian historical analytical method. But it may also be interpreted that, at least in the beginning, Athenians had underestimated the lethality of the disease. It seems that as a hypothesis is verified today by the initial reactions of some countries to the synchronous pandemic. As in ancient Athens, some countries today have ignored the synchronous pandemic despite Thucydides' warning of "μὴ ἀγνοεῖν"[10]. But many other testable hypotheses can be derived from Thucydides' historical interpretation of the ancient epidemic. These are discussed in the following sections.

The Thucydidian Hypotheses about Pandemics

My reading of the relevant passages on the ancient epidemic of 430 BCE is in the form of testable hypotheses using the historical analytical method. I assume that Thucydides developed a number of hypotheses; even though he did not mention them explicitly. I have categorized these hypotheses into four groups.

H1: Blame it on Foreigners and Enemies
H2: An Epidemic has Different Individual Effects
H3: An Epidemic Gives Rise to Metaphysical Explanations
H4: An Epidemic has Social and Political Consequences

In the following sections of this paper, I discuss separately each one of the above hypotheses.

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10. A reader may point out that nobody reads Thucydides under the current calamity of the pandemic. On the contrary, there many articles in the international press which compare the ancient Athenian epidemic with the current pandemic. Thucydides would respond that it is in the human nature not to learn from past mistakes or experiences.

Blame it on Foreigners and Enemies

I have already mentioned in the previous section that Thucydides said that Athenians knew that the same epidemic hit other areas as well, such as Lemnos, but no casual connection was made between these places and the epidemic that ravaged Athens in the summer of 430 BCE.

Instead, Thucydides cited two different sources from which Athenians thought the epidemic may came from. The first were the barbarophone as Homer would call them. According to the Thucydidian narration, as it was said (ὡς λέγεται), the epidemic first started in Ethiopia in the upper Egypt (most probably in modern Sudan); it went down to Egypt and Libya and then it outspreaded in the entire Kingdom. And suddenly (ἐξαπιναίως) struck (ἐσέπεσε) Athens but not all at once. It first started in Piraeus and then came to the upper city (ἐς τὴν ἄνω πόλιν ἀφίκετο) of Athens. By the time it spread throughout the city, too many had already died (ἔθνησκον πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἤδη). Unfortunately, as previously mentioned, Thucydides did not give a number because it was unknown.

But there was a second theory which was said (ἐλέχθη) during that time. Athenians blamed it on the Peloponnesians who threw (ἐσβεβλήκοιεν) the virus (φάρμακα) into the wells (ἐς τὰ φρέατα) of Piraeus which were used as drinking water because the area did not have fountains. And this relates to the fact that the epidemic started in Piraeus; then it spread throughout the city.

It seems to me that Thucydides did not accept any of these two allegations. He used the terms "as is said" (ὡς λέγεται) for those with a xenolalia and "was said" (ἐλέχθη) for the Peloponnesians[11]. Thucydides was a rational thinker and would never accept such explanations as the real causes of a natural phenomenon like an epidemic. I think the dominant explanation was the first one because it persisted as an explanation and was still used at the time when Thucydides was writing on the Peloponnesian War. On the other hand, the other explanation most probably did not stand the test of time. Does this mean that Thucydides had adopted the former over the latter? Did he himself blame the barbarians over the fellow Peloponnesians? I do not think so at all. From an historical analytical point of view, the first hypothesis was difficult or impossible to verify. On the other hand, the second hypothesis was easily verifiable. Most probably there were many others drinking water from the

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11. On the use of the word λέγεται and the different varieties by Thucydides see H. D. Westlake, "ΛΕΓΕΤΑΙ in Thucydides," *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, 30, Fasc. 4 (1977): 345-362. On page 347 he explains the use of the word as follows "Few difficulties are presented by passages in which Thucydides uses a legetai phrase in a past tense, such as ἐλέχθη or ὡς ἐλέγετο. In each passage he mentions a report or rumor current at the time which he cannot confirm or deny, though in most cases he is decidedly skeptical. He does not state the reason for his uncertainty, but it is more or less easily deducible from the context. His sources are undoubtedly oral". This is exactly my reading of the relevant passages.

wells of Piraeus and not infected. So, this hypothesis collapsed as a valid explanation[12].

I do believe that Thucydides did not adopt either explanation. Just in the next sentence, after reporting the two explanations, he questions both rumors. Thucydides wrote that everyone (ὡς ἕκαστος) said (λεγέτω) whatever he knew (γιγνώσκει) as logical or correct (εἰκὸς ἦν) which gave rise to this (γενέσθαι αὐτό). Such people included both physicians and ignorants (καὶ ἰατρὸς καὶ ἰδιώτης). He highlighted the ignorance of these epidemics, i.e., the speculation on the real causes of such diseases which in essence change the nature of things (καὶ τὰς αἰτίας ἅστινας νομίζει τοσαύτης μεταβολῆς ἱκανὰς εἶναι δύναμιν ἐς τὸ μεταστῆσαι σχεῖν).

Thucydides said in this sentence that he could not explain the nature of the disease. Instead, what he could offer to the humanity was his own account of the plight because he was infected (and survived) and he had seen many others who were infected. He provided an excellent description of the symptoms but it seems that they are not sufficient for the modern virologists or epidemiologists to elucidate what was this epidemic all about. The issue is still debated. Thucydides' indirect admission that he could not tell anything about its causes (τὰς αἰτίας) shows that his history writing is based on logic and reason and not on what was said by ignorant people. If I may speculate about the nature of the epidemic, I would tend to agree with those who state that was something new which has not appeared yet again. If it reappears again, we would know it from Thucydides' excellent description of its symptoms.

Let me summarize this hypothesis. If an epidemic struck at a country, some people would blame it on foreigners. Is this hypothesis rejected by the synchronous pandemic?[13] No, it is not. The richest nation on earth, the one which produces an immense amount of new knowledge by using scientific methods and reason, has a President who blamed the pandemic on China. The President of the USA did not call it a coronavirus but a Wuhan virus, from the area of China where the first symptoms appeared. Of course, China retaliated by stating that USA started it. The definition of barbarians is subjective. If you are Chinese, then the USA is barbarian. But if you are a US citizen, then it is the Chinese who are barbarians. So, blaming it on barbarians has stood the test of time as a hypothesis. It did not fade away.

Some take this hypothesis even further. They claim that this is part of a biological war. The soft version of this explanation alleges that this virus was

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12. The "blamed it on Spartans" did not live long. This is also supported by A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides,* vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956).

13. I am not going to give any references to these sources. In many cases, these opinions have been covered up by "serious" think tanks. And the reason is not what they say but how they substantiate their argument. If someone says that the X country or the Y group of individuals spread the virus, they must have the evidence to support it. They do not. According to Thucydides they are the "idiots" in the English meaning of the word, which did not have the same meaning in Thucydides' time when it simply meant private individuals.

born in the Chinese labs and it spread all over the world by a mistake. I heard the same thing about the HIV virus that was born in California Labs. Some even used this as an excuse to attack globalization. The strong version of this explanation is that this was not an accident. But there is a war of spies coming from all the big international political actors such as the USA, China, Russia etc. Even though I have read many journalistic reports about the role of spies in warning that a virus might generate a pandemic and/or the pandemic is instrumentalized by some countries in support of their international aspirations, I have seen the strong version of the explanation. As in Thucydides, I was only a bystander of discussions in downtown Athens (close to where Thucydides used to be present) who seemed to me they were adopting the argument of a biological war. When I pointed out that this was said in 430 BCE as an explanation of the ancient Athenian epidemic, nobody believed me.

As far as the first hypothesis is concerned, the current generation has not learned much from Thucydides warnings. One explanation might be that given by Thucydides himself: human nature does not change and people are similar if not identical across space and time.

An Epidemic has Different Individual Effects

Epidemics and pandemics show that men and women are not the same. Both the symptoms of the disease differ as a well as their attitudes towards it. Some are heroic and some run-away. Some are infected and they have an easy way out; others suffer and even worst die from it. In the beginning, Thucydides described the common characteristics as symptoms of the epidemic (Τὸ μὲν οὖν νόσημα … τοιοῦτον ἦν ἐπὶ πᾶν τὴν ἰδέαν). But there were differences among those infected. These variations, however, are not mentioned. My explanation is that Thucydides' purpose was not to explain the disease itself for two reasons. Firstly, he was not writing about the disease but about the history of the war. Also, if he had not been infected himself, I do not think he would have ever dedicated so many lines to write about it. Secondly, he did not know anything about its causes and pathology. Thucydides decided to skip (παραλιπόντι) the description of these additional symptoms which varied between individuals.

As mentioned, some people were able to survive while others did not. This could not be explained either. Pericles, his sister and his two sons did not make it. But Thucydides survived. There was no medicine (ἴαμα) that could cure the disease. Prometheus did not bring any vaccines. He had other priorities. He brought them later. Thucydides mentioned that medicines which cured made others worse. Even the quality of health care did not help either. Those who had good health care (θεραπευόμενοι) were dying along with those who had no care at all (ἀμελείᾳ). All died irrespectively of the

quality of health care they were receiving (…ἀλλὰ πάντα ξυνήρει καὶ τὰ πάσῃ διαίτῃ θεραπευόμενα).

Thucydides observed that in the year of the epidemic (430 BCE), Athenians did not suffer from normal diseases; no other serious disease occurred apart from the usual ones (κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον οὐδὲν τῶν εἰωθότων). But even if they appeared, all resulted in the same thing: people were eventually dying from the epidemic. Presumably those who had underlying (chronic) diseases were more vulnerable to the epidemic. Apart from this group of people at risk, Thucydides mentioned the medical staff as being vulnerable because they were the first who contacted those infected (ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ μάλιστα ἔθνῃσκον ὅσῳ καὶ μάλιστα προσῇσαν).

However, the difference was not restricted only to symptoms and the epidemiology. Most importantly it affected individual behaviour. I have already mentioned Pericles' change of behaviour and beliefs as cited by Plutarch. Some people were scared. They did not go near an infected person (εἴτε γὰρ μὴ 'θέλοιεν δεδιότες ἀλλήλοις προσιέναι,) who was left abandoned (ἀπώλλυντο ἐρῆμοι). Others, on the other hand, had the virtue (οἱ ἀρετῆς) and felt ashamed (αἰσχύνῃ) to leave their friends to die alone. Worst of all (δεινότατον δὲ παντὸς) was the effect on people's mood (ἀθυμία) once they realized that they were infected. The result was hopelessness (ἀνέλπιστον) which they could not stand (οὐκ ἀντεῖχον).

Thucydides also made an important observation that those who survived, like himself, were not infected a second time and even if they were infected, this was not lethal (δὶς γὰρ τὸν αὐτόν, ὥστε καὶ κτείνειν, οὐκ ἐπελάμβανεν). And these people were so happy that they thought for the time being that they would not die from any other disease. They were immune not to the disease which caused the specific epidemic but to all types of diseases. According to Thucydides, this was an "empty hope" (κούφης ἐλπίδος); an expression that even today is used in Greece to describe vain hopes, which, nevertheless, make someone temporarily happy (παραχρῆμα περιχαρεῖ). Thucydides mentioned that these people were very compassionate to those who were infected because they knew what they had to go through.

The synchronous pandemic does not reject any of the above observations. Firstly, there is a general idea of the symptoms of Covid-19, as in 430 BCE, but there are also many variations. Some even show no symptoms at all which might have been the case in ancient times. Secondly, as in 430 BCE Athens, in today's world of 2020, people are dying alone either in hospitals (nursing homes) or in their own houses without any help. Thirdly, even those who have the best of health care system (countries and individuals) cannot avoid death. It hits both the rich and the poor; the known and unknown persons. As in ancient Athens, the medical and nursing staff is the most vulnerable social-professional group. The current evidence does not reject this hypothesis even though today the available Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) have been

well developed. In antiquity these were non-existent. Fourthly, similarly to ancient Athens no medicine can absolutely cure Covid-19. Today, as in ancient Athens, some medicine seems to work for some people, but it does not work for others. Despite all the progress in pharmaceuticals, epidemics and pandemics outsmart human ingenuity. Fifthly, people with underlying diseases (i.e., suffering from other diseases such as cardiovascular, kidney, diabetes, blood pressure etc.) are finally deceased from the Covid-19. This was the case in ancient Athens as well. Sixthly, one of the consequences of the disease for both those who were infected and those who were not is the feeling of isolation, desperation and depression. In ancient times, Thucydides told us that people were suffering from ἀθυμία which can be translated as depression. Seventhly, today we do not really know whether people who are infected cannot be infected again and if they are infected whether they can die from it. Thucydides hands-on evidence did not reject the hypothesis of immunization, i.e. infected but survived people did not die if they happened to get infected a second time.

Finally, a note should made on the social or physical distancing. The war forced masses of people to move from the countryside behind the Long Walls of Athens where not only adequate houses were unavailable but people were forced to sleep in dirty and crowded huts. The connection of overcrowded places and the spread of the disease was clearly stated in Thucydides' discussion of the epidemic in two different parts. For the first time, Thucydides mentioned this in 2.52.1-2.52.2 (Ἐπίεσε δ' αὐτοὺς μᾶλλον πρὸς τῷ ὑπάρχοντι πόνῳ καὶ ἡ ξυγκομιδὴ ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν ἐς τὸ ἄστυ, καὶ οὐχ ἧσσον τοὺς ἐπελθόντας. οἰκιῶν γὰρ οὐχ ὑπαρχουσῶν, ἀλλ' ἐν καλύβαις πνιγηραῖς ὥρᾳ ἔτους διαιτωμένων ὁ φθόρος ἐγίγνετο οὐδενὶ κόσμῳ).

But this citation by itself does not show any link between the density of population and the spread of the disease because the emphasis is on the inconvenience of stay and the quality of housing. However, later on, in 2.54.5, Thucydides explicitly made the connection between the spread of the disease and the overcrowded Athens during this period. He wrote that in Athens and in other places with high population density (τὰ πολυανθρωπότατα) the disease was more lethal.

Thucydides never suggested the idea of social or physical distance as a cure to the spread of the epidemic. Today humanity learned that distancing might be a good antidote to the spread and therefore the lethality of the disease. At last we found something that future generations learned from past mistakes.

An Epidemic Gives Rise to Metaphysical Explanations

The ancient epidemic could not be explained by scientific methods. The medical profession of the time could find neither the cause nor the cure[14]. Also, epidemiologists today and then could not find the source either. In such situations of ignorance, metaphysical explanations find fertile land to grow. Thucydides gave us two such explanations.

The first metaphysical explanation is based on an elegant story based on the spelling of two Greek words which phonetically sound the same: λιμός (famine) and λοιμός (plague). Thucydides wrote that older Athenians remembered an old saying which stated that "a Dorian war will come along with a plague" (ἥξει Δωριακὸς πόλεμος καὶ λοιμὸς ἅμ' αὐτῷ). However, he pointed out that the old saying was talking about λιμός (famine) and not about λοιμός (plague). Since this was a verse of a presumably larger piece of a poem, it went down from generations to genarations by the word of mouth (as all epic and didactic poetry or prose). Even though some disapproved of such an interpretation of the word -plague instead of the correct famine-, Thucydides concluded that, for the time being (ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος), the interpretation of the plague won (ἐνίκησε) over famine and the word plague was used (ἐνίκησε δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος εἰκότως λοιμὸν εἰρῆσθαι). Immediately, though, he pointed out that if another Dorian War happened and was associated with a famine, then people will interpret the old saying differently. Why? Thucydides generalized his observation and said that it is in people's nature to adjust their memory to what they suffer from "…οἱ γὰρ ἄνθρωποι πρὸς ἃ ἔπασχον τὴν μνήμην ἐποιοῦντο". And in 430 BCE they suffered (ἔπασχον) from the plague.

The second explanation had to do with the God Apollon. It is well known from Homer and in the Trojan War that Gods had taken sides with one or another army; with one or another protagonist (hero) of the war. Athenians remembered a prophesy given by the Oracle of Delphi which was a Temple of Apollon. Pythia told Lacedemonians that they would win the war if they fought with all their power (εἰ χρὴ πολεμεῖν ἀνεῖλε κατὰ κράτος πολεμοῦσι νίκην ἔσεσθαι). In such a case, Apollo would help them (καὶ αὐτὸς ἔφη ξυλλήψεσθαι).

Thucydides wrote that Athenians believed that the epidemic was sent by Apollo to help the Lacedemonians because the pestilence started right after the Peloponessian War. Of course, if Athenians won the war, the Pythia could always argue that Lacedomonians did not fight with the required zeal (κατὰ

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14. It is interesting to note that one of the participants in Plato's Symposium was physician -Eryximachus. His theory on what causes the epidemics (λοιμοί) is related to unjustified cosmic Eros (i.e., sexual encounters) and this is what brings the epidemics and other illnesses (οἵ τε γὰρ λοιμοὶ φιλοῦσι γίγνεσθαι ἐκ τῶν τοιούτων καὶ ἄλλ᾽ αὖ ὅμοια πολλὰ νοσήματα καὶ τοῖς θηρίοις καὶ τοῖς φυτοῖς).

κϱάτος πολεμοῦσι) as the oracle demanded. This was surmised by the Oracle. The Oracle (Gods) never makes mistaken prophesies. People interpret it the wrong way.

Related to this is a story told by Plutarch. In his work on Pericles, he wrote that Theophrastus used as an example (a case study) in his work on *Ethics* Pericles change of attitude when he was infected by the disease. Pericles, throughout his life and under the influence of his teacher Anaxagoras, had adopted an orthological approch in explaining natural phenomena. However, according to Plutarch, in his last years of life and under the influence of some women had an amulet in his neck to protect him from the disease. The way Plutarch mentioned that Pericles himself was showing this to his friends to demonstrate how personal sufferings can make someone believe in such a stupidity. This indicates to me that Pericles was not superstitious but was wearing the amulet to please his surroundings. I have seen this in modern Greece many times. People's logical reaction when asked about it, they say it does not hurt to wear it. Why does someone wear a decorated and colourful wrist watch and not a very simple one? I consider it a stoic approach to life.

I found another story reported by Dan (2008)[15] citing L. Weber (1921) but the original source is Lucian of Samosata, the satirical author of the 2nd century C.E. He records the following legend (vol. 2, p. 103)[16]:

> At the time of the great plague, the wife of Architeles the Areopagite had a vision: the Scythian Toxaris stood over her and commanded her to tell the Athenians that the plague would cease if they would sprinkle their back-streets with wine. The Athenians attended to his instructions, and after several sprinklings had been performed, the plague troubled them no more; whether it was that the perfume of the wine neutralized certain noxious vapours, or that the hero, being a medical hero, had some other motive for his advice. However that may be, he continues to this day to draw a fee for his professional services, in the shape of a white horse, which is sacrificed on his tomb. This tomb was pointed out by Dimaenete as the place from which he issued with his instructions about the wine; and beneath it Toxaris was found buried, his identity being established not merely by the inscription, of which only a part remained legible, but also by the figure engraved on the monument, which was that of a Scythian, with a bow, ready strung, in his left hand, and in the right what appeared to be a book. You may still make out more than half the figure, with the bow and book complete: but the upper portion of the stone, including the face, has suffered from the ravages of time. It is situated not

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15. See Anca Dan "Τόξαρις" *Εγκυκλοπαίδεια Μείζονος Ελληνισμού* (Εύξεινος Πόντος, 2008).

16. In *The Works of Lucian of Samosata,* tr. by H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923), vol. 2, pp. 102-109.

far from the Dipylus, on your left as you leave the Dipylus for the Academy. The mound is of no great size, and the pillar lies prostrate: yet it never lacks a garland, and there are statements to the effect that fever-patients have been known to be cured by the hero; which indeed is not surprising, considering that he once healed an entire city.

Apparently, Athenians practiced this -which most probaly worked as a kind of disinfection still used today, e.g., chlorine. Because of this apparent success Athenians treated him as the physisian-hero who saved many lives and every year they honored his memory.

In the sychronous pandemic of 2020, metaphysical explanations do not seem to be the norm. However, since the outset of Covid-19, Iran has sent the message that this disease was sent by God to punish the western civilization. But God punished Iranians as well. God did not exclude them from the pandemic. Apparently the sin and the infedility is independent of nationality and ethnicity.

In the USA metaphysical explanations thrive in all its religions. The argument of the nature of God -good or bad-, hasreappeared. From my reading of all the fiction and non-fiction literature of pandemics, I never encountered even one exemption to this rule. Diseases are sent by the mighty God. Any religion's God.

At least in ancient Greece there was a hope that a feud between Gods -Appollo versus Athena and Poseidon- might save the non-mighty and mortal human beings. In the sychronous monotheist religions such a hope has vanished. It is not a progress but a regression. The Greek Orthodox Church partially allows for more than one God and of course its many Saints who can act independently. I have not seen any source which argues that the Gods or Saints of the Greek Orthodox Church had different opinions about the destiny of a specific human being. If you are protected even by one Saint of the Greek Orthodox Church then even God cannot intervene to change this good fortune. You see that in modern Greece. People who are saved from the Covid-19 say that God saved them or the Holy Mother saved them or a specific saint saved them. This plurality shows that Greeks never lost their memory ofthe Gods of Ancient Greece, with the sole exception I have already mentioned: nowdays Gods and saints do not fight between themselves, which I take as a regression. If one is protected by one, there is no right for others to intervene, and this includes the mighty God.

On the other hand, there is a number of writings that predicted an epidemic or pandemic but these were based on the statistical occurrence of such phenomena rather than considered God's Action. However, even in ancient times, Thucydides mentioned that these metaphysical explanations were abandoned at the end.

What priests and oracles had prophesized was entirely useless and in the end they distanced themselves because the disease has defeated them (ὅσα τε πρὸς ἱεροῖς ἱκέτευσαν ἢ μαντείοις καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις ἐχρήσαντο, πάντα ἀνωφελῆ ἦν, τελευτῶντές τε αὐτῶν ἀπέστησαν ὑπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ νικώμενοι).

I am not sure that this claim by Thucydides had a universal application. I cannot conceptualize how someone may have lost his faith to God when he trusts that these diseases along with many other ordeals are sent by God to test people's confidence in him. This circular logic is at its best when is applied to people who believe in metaphysical explanations.

An Epidemic has Social and Political Consequences

Thucydides in 2.52-2.53 described Athenians' social reactions to the epidemic. I have already discussed individual reactions to the disease. Thucydides separated them from social impacts (including anthropological, economic, ethical and psychological) and political (including military) effects. Since then, humanity has learned that epidemics and wars change social and political attitudes. The ancient Athenian plague was not an exception. Epidemic and war co-existed.

One of the effects of the war, which I have already mentioned, was that Athenians were forced to move behind the Long Walls. This was a strategic military decision suggested by Pericles. From this political decision a number of social problems emerged. Overcrowded Athenians encountered difficulties in finding a place to stay. Space was extremely limited. They used even sacred monuments which was an early indication of violating social norms.

Once the epidemic struck, because of the seclusion of population in a small area, the infection spread immediately and people were dying like sheep. People were dying everywhere and without any help. One could see corpses everywhere. Thucydides observed that because of the high spread of the epidemic, people became indifferent to sacred places. Before no one was allowed to die inside a temple but now, because of the force of the epidemic, this custom was violated. However, even the social custom of burying changed dramatically without any respect for the way people were cremated and buried.

The social effect of the epidemic included the violation of law as well. Those who argued in favor of virtue (the good) had an increasing difficulty in persuading others as the epidemic persisted. They counter-argued that the disease did not discriminate between good (ethical, virtues) and bad (sinful, non-virtuous) people; between rich and poor; between loyal and non-loyal to the laws of the *politeia*. Thus, people lived for the moment and tried to enjoy their lives engaging in self-indulgences throughout whatever time they thought was left for them. When a rich person died, his property was stolen. Divine or man-made laws could not prevent such antisocial behaviour.

Thucydides gave a logical justification or explanation (εἰκὸς εἶναι) of such behaviour arguing that people were not following the law because by the time they would have to face a court they might not be alive. What would be a greater punishment than the epidemic itself which was equivalent to a death penalty which, if inflicted could occur in less than ten days according to Thucydides' account. So, before the epidemic struck them (πρὶν ἐμπεσεῖν), it is logical to enjoy one's life (τοῦ βίου τι ἀπολαῦσαι). This reveals once again the orthological approach of Thucydides analysis of history.

The social upheaval created by the epidemic has a direct effect on the political process; especially when this co-exists with a war. Some Athenians blamed the whole situation on Pericles because he was the one who insisted going into war with Sparta. Thucydides links the two in 2.57. While the Peloponnesians were outside the Athenian Long Walls, the navy of Athens was active but the epidemic struck both the city of Athens and the army (ἡ νόσος ἔν τε τῇ στρατιᾷ τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἔφθειρε καὶ ἐν τῇ πόλει). For example, the expedition in Poteidia was not successful and the Athenian army of 4,000 soldiers lost 1,500 to the disease. At the same time, those *douloi* who escaped the city were informing the Peloponnesians what went on inside the city due to the epidemic; the latter information scared away the Peloponnesian who left Attica earlier than planned.

Thus, Athenians had to face the epidemic inside the city, the besieging Peloponnesians (destroying their fertile land and private houses) and the *doulous* who were escaping Athens. The political situation could not have been worse. The war started with the worse terms for Athenians. Some of them blamed all their misfortues to the war and the war on Pericles. Thus, they thought that it would have been a good idea if they could come to terms and sign a peace treaty with the Spartans[17]. Thucydides before citing Pericles' response to all these accusations made an excellent introduction-summary of the situation which existed in Athens just after the epidemic (2.59).

> Μετὰ δὲ τὴν δευτέραν ἐσβολὴν τῶν Πελοποννησίων οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι, ὡς ἥ τε γῆ αὐτῶν ἐτέτμητο τὸ δεύτερον καὶ ἡ νόσος ἐπέκειτο ἅμα καὶ ὁ πόλεμος, ἠλλοίωντο τὰς γνώμας, καὶ τὸν μὲν Περικλέα ἐν αἰτίᾳ εἶχον ὡς πείσαντα σφᾶς πολεμεῖν καὶ δι' ἐκεῖνον ταῖς ξυμφοραῖς περιπεπτωκότες, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους ὥρμηντο ξυγχωρεῖν· καὶ πρέσβεις τινὰς

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17. Aristophanes' masterpiece -*Acharnians* performed in 425 BCE-, reflected this idea of a peace treaty with Sparta but the Athenian Demos was against it. This comedy was staged two years after the epidemic had disappeared and therefore could not play a role in changing the opinion of the majority of Athenians who wanted war. This is another indication that the war occurred not because of Pericles but because the majority of Athenians wanted it. The protagonist of the comedy, Dicaeopolis, owner of an agricultural property in the area of Acharnais is forced to stay behind the Long Walls leaving his land uncultivated. According to the play, he signed a private peace treaty with Sparta so that he could work on his land and enjoy all the fruits of peace.

πέμψαντες ὡς αὐτοὺς ἄπρακτοι ἐγένοντο. πανταχόθεν τε τῇ γνώμῃ ἄποροι καθεστηκότες ἐνέκειντο τῷ Περικλεῖ.

After the second invasion of the Peloponnesians in Athens, where they destroyed for the second time their land and the epidemic and the war were pressing, opinions about Pericles were changing and the reason was that he persuaded them to fight and because of him they were suffering and they were ready to compromise with the Lacedemonias. And they send respresentatives but nothing happened. In a such general deadlock they were against Pericles.

Pericles saw all these and with his usual determination and rhetorical skills gave Athenians courage and hope. Once again, Thucydides saved for the future generations another speech by Pericles in front of the *Ecclesia of Demos*. Pericles told the Athenian public that he was expecting such behaviour against him because he recognized that people were suffering from both the epidemic and the war. The purpose of his speech was to persuade Athenians that they did not treat him fairly. From what Thucydides has told us, Pericles was able to persuade Athenians to continue the war and he was able to be reelected as a leader. Unfortunately for him, his sister, his two boys and many of his friends and advisors could not survive the disease. The leaders who followed Pericles and led Athens did not meet the basic standards which their epoch and the situation of the war demanded. Nevertheless, Athens was able to counterbalance the Peloponnesian force and by 421 BCE they signed yet another peace agreement. Five years later the expedition to Sicily -contrary to Pericles's warnings in the beginning of the war-, brought Athens to its knees.

Pericles' speech was a long one and made many noticable observations which Thucydides presumably thought that future generations may benefit from. Pericles made clear from the beginning that a politeia can survive only if its citizens are united. This is not good only for the politeia but for each one individually. Secondly, the decision to go to war was a common decision and it is unfair now to blame it on Pericles alone. He built his argument saying that the reason Athenians changed their mind was the epidemic.

This points to the casual relations between the epidemic and the political and military developments. Pericles acknowledge Athenians were facing many problems such as the catastrophe of their property but most important one was the epidemic (ὃ ὑμῖν πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις οὐχ ἥκιστα καὶ κατὰ τὴν νόσον γεγένηται).

He recommended that Athenians set their personal grieving and sufferings aside and concentrate on the issue of common salvation (ἀπαλγήσαντας δὲ τὰ ἴδια τοῦ κοινοῦ τῆς σωτηρίας ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι). Pericles made a cost-benefit analysis of what Athenians had lost so far (land and property) but keeping their greatest wealth intact, i.e., the navy power of Ancient Athens. Pericles

concluded that if luck were to be distributed half and half between themselves and their enemies, then, in addition to hope, the boldness of Athenians would determine the outcome of the war.

Thus, Athenians should not have complained about the results of the war because these are things that one would expect from such a situation. But he did acknowledge that things were aggravated by the unexpected epidemic (ἐπιγεγένηταί τε πέρα ὧν προσεδεχόμεθα ἡ νόσος ἥδε, πρᾶγμα μόνον δὴ τῶν πάντων ἐλπίδος κρεῖσσον γεγενημένον).

The decision by the Athenian Demos was not an easy one. Firstly, they decided to fine Pericles with an amount which is not mentioned by Thucydides. Secondly, they did not re-elect him as *strategos*. However, after one year, they elected him again as their leader because they admitted -as Thucydides mentioned- that he was the one who could lead them in such dificulty times.

Thucydides revealed that Pericles advised Athenians that they would win the war if they did not endeavour in new conquests (as they did years later in Sicily) and if they protected their city. According to Thucydides, Athenians did exactly the opposite. Based on these, Thucydides reached a conclusion which becomes a testable hypothesis: can democracy survive without good leaders? It seems to me that Thucydides' answer is no. This is how I interpret the section 2.65.10. Thucydides said that the political system of Athens was called democracy but in reality, it was one man's rule (ἐγίγνετό τε λόγῳ μὲν δημοκρατία, ἔργῳ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ πρώτου ἀνδρὸς ἀρχή).

After two and a half years from the beginning of the war, Pericles died. Despite his early death, Athenians could easily have won the war if they had followed his advice. One may argue that if Pericles had survived the disease, Athenians would have emerged victorious. The epidemic had an impact on the outcome of the war because Athenians lost a great leader just in the beginning of this long Hellenic civil war. In 404 BCE the end of the war found them defeated. It was the beginning of the end for the Athenian Classical (Golden) Age. And nobody can argue that the epidemic played any role[18]. By the end of the war, the epidemic had been forgotten. Thus, the political and social implications of epidemics and pandemics are destined to be short-run and they last as long as the disease itself last.

It is too early to draw any analogies with the current pandemic. Some early warning signals do support Thucydides hypotheses on social and political effects but only time will show. However, if the effects of the great

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18. Thus, I disagree with all those writers who claim that the epidemic had significant (long-run) military, political and social consequences. For an example of such a study see M.A. Soupios "Impact of the plague in Ancient Greece," *Infectious Disease Clinics North America*, 18 (2004): 45–51. The argument of Pericles lost in the epidemic cannot explain the defeat of 404 BCE and the decline of Athens because Pericles would have died one day if nothing else from old age. In 404, if he lived, he would have been 90 years old.

epidemic of 430 BCE are the rule, then the social and political reactions that we see today with the Covid-19 will be forgotten once the pandemic is over.

Epilogue

Thucydides was right, as human nature does not change. People do not differ not only across countries but across epochs as well. The only difference is in technology as so eloquently described by Hesiod in his *Works and Days* when making a reference to Prometheus.

Thucydides was wrong when he believed that writing his history would prevent future generations of the human race to avoid making the same mistakes again. The multitude of wars that followed the Peloponnesian War including the so many civil wars in Greece and elsewhere do not so far verify Thucydides' thesis. The mistake of a war, if it is a mistake, seems to be unavoidable.

On the other hand, the same applies to individual, social and political reactions to epidemics. Apart from some small differences, people and societies respond to epidemics and pandemics today in the same or in similar way as did the Ancient Athenians in 430 BCE. And while one might rightly think that a tremendous progress has been made in medical and pharmaceutical technology, the most fundamental problems remain the same when one compares the ancient Athenian epidemic with the current ecumenical pandemic. As in the ancient Athens, humanity today does not know the source, the microbial cause and the nature of the disease; it has not found a cure for the disease; the medical staff (doctors and nurses) were and still are today the most vulnerable groups of the society; and people who have underlying chronic history of illnesses have a higher probability of dying from it.

Social and political issues seem to be the same. As in the ancient epidemic so in the synchronous pandemic, some people, even head of states blame it on foreigners. Some go so far as to argue that it is part of a biological war; similarly, to what some Athenians thought about their epidemic. Comparable are the reactions to social norms. Today, as in ancient Athens, people are dying alone and are buried in mass graves. Some citizens blame it on their politicians. Even metaphysical explanations have not disappeared. In the synchronous pandemic, even the metaphysical explanations of God sending the disease to punish the sinful have been adopted by heads of states and religious leaders. It is interesting how similar does the world look today to the one of ancient Athens. The only difference is in technology.

After all these years, it seems only Prometheus has been working hard to change the material conditions. Unfortunately, philosophers and historians have not worked as hard to change people's non-orthological explanations of ecumenical phenomena.

Acknowledgements

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